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AN

ABRIDGEMENT

OF

LECTURES

ON

RHETORIC

BY HUGH BLAIR, D. D.

REVISED AND CORRECTED.

CAMBRIDGE,
PRINTED AT THE *UNIVERSITY PRESS*
BY WILLIAM HILLIARD.
MDCCCII.

Haven. 1804.

Educ T 768.02.215

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE want of a ſyſtem of Rhetoric upon a conciſe plan and at an eaſy price will, it is preſumed, render this little Volume acceptable to the public. To collect knowledge, which is ſcattered over a wide extent, into a ſmall compaſs; if it has not the merit of originality, has at leaſt the advantage of being uſeful. Many, who are terrified at the idea of travelling over a ponderous volume in ſearch of information, will yet ſet out on a ſhort journey in purſuit of ſcience with alacrity and profit. Thoſe, for whom the following Eſſays are principally intended, will derive peculiar benefit from the brevity, with which they are conveyed. To youth, who are engaged in the rudiments of learning; whoſe time and attention muſt be occupied by a variety of ſubjects; every branch of ſcience

ſhould be rendered as conciſe, as poſſible. Hence the attention is not fatigued, nor the memory overloaded.

That a knowledge of Rhetoric forms a very material part of the education of a polite ſcholar muſt be univerſally allowed. Any attempt therefore, however imperfect, to make ſo uſeful an art more generally known, has claim to that praiſe, which is the reward of good intention. With this the Editor will be ſufficiently ſatisfied; ſince being ſerviceable to others is the moſt agreeable method of becoming contented with ourſelves.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION	PAGE
On Taſte	1
Criticiſm—Genius—Pleaſures of Taſte—Sublimity in Objects	6
Sublimity in Writing	16
Beauty, and other Pleaſures of Taſte	26
Origin and Progreſs of Language	34
Riſe and Progreſs of Language and of Writing	43
Structure of Language	50
Structure of Language. Engliſh Tongue	55
Style—Perſpicuity and Preciſion	63
Structure of Sentences	68
The ſame ſubject	74
Structure of Sentences. Harmony	82
Origin and Nature of Figurative Language.	89
Metaphor	95
Hyperbole—Apoſtrophe	101
Perſonification and Apoſtrophe	103
Compariſon, Antitheſis, Interrogation, Exclamation, and other Figures of Speech	108
Antitheſis	112
Interrogation and Exclamation	113
Viſion and Climax	114
General Characters of Style—diffuſe, conciſe, feeble, nervous, dry, plain, neat, elegant, flowery	116

PAGE

Style—ſimple, affected vehement. Directions for forming a proper Style 123

Critical Examination of Mr. Addiſon's Style in No. 411 *of the Spectator* 131

Eloquence. Origin of Eloquence—Grecian Eloquence—Demoſthenes 143

Roman Eloquence—Cicero. Modern Eloquence . . 149

Eloquence of Popular Aſſemblies 156

Eloquence of the Bar 160

Eloquence of the Pulpit 167

Conduct of a Diſcourſe in all its Parts. Introduction, Diviſion, Narration, and Explication . . 172

The Argumentative Part of a Diſcourſe, the Pathetic Part, and the Peroration 180

Pronunciation or Delivery 186

Means of improving in Eloquence 197

Comparative Merit of the Antients and Moderns . 205

Hiſtorical Writing 208

Philoſophical Writing and Dialogue 213

Epiſtolary Writing 215

Fictitious Hiſtory 216

Nature of Poetry. Its Origin and Progreſs—Verſification 218

Engliſh Verſification 220

Paſtoral Poetry 222

Lyric Poetry 228

Didactic Poetry 230

Deſcriptive Poetry 233

PAGE

The Poetry of the Hebrews 238
Epic Poetry 243
Homer's Iliad and Odyſſey 248
The Æneid of Virgil 253
Lucan's Pharſalia 256
Taſſo's Jeruſalem 259
The Luſiad of Camoens 261
The Telemachus of Fenelon 263
The Henriade of Voltaire 265
Milton's Paradiſe Loſt 267
Dramatic Poetry. Tragedy 273
Greek Tragedy 284
French Tragedy 286
Engliſh Tragedy 287
Comedy 290
Antient Comedy 293
Spaniſh Comedy 295
French Comedy . . . . . *ibid.*
Engliſh Comedy 296

INTRODUCTION.

A PROPER acquaintance with the circle of Liberal Arts is requiſite to the ſtudy of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. To extend the knowledge of them muſt be the firſt care of thoſe, who wiſh either to write with reputation, or ſo to expreſs themſelves in public, as to command attention. Among the antients it was an eſſential principle, that the orator ought to be converſant in every department of learning. No art indeed can be contrived, which can ſtamp merit on a compoſition, rich or ſplendid in expreſſion, but barren or erroneous in ſentiment. Oratory, it is true, has often been diſgraced by attempts to eſtabliſh a falſe criterion of its value. Writers have endeavored to ſupply want of matter by graces of compoſition; and courted the temporary applauſe of the ignorant inſtead of the laſting approbation of the diſcerning. But ſuch impoſture muſt be ſhort and tranſitory. The body and ſubſtance of any valuable compoſition muſt be formed of knowledge and ſcience. Rhe-

toric completes the ſtructure, and adds the poliſh; but firm and ſolid bodies only are able to receive it.

Among the learned it has long been a conteſted, and remains ſtill an undecided queſtion, whether Nature or Art contribute moſt toward excellence in writing and diſcourſe. Various may be the opinions with reſpect to the manner, in which Art can moſt effectually furniſh aid for ſuch a purpoſe; and it were preſumption to aſſert, that rhetorical rules, how juſt ſoever, are ſufficient to form an orator. Private application and ſtudy, ſuppoſing natural genius to be favorable, are certainly ſuperior to any ſyſtem of public inſtruction. But, though rules and inſtructions cannot effect every thing, which is requiſite; they may be of conſiderable uſe. If they cannot inſpire genius; they can give it direction and aſſiſtance. If they cannot make barrenneſs fruitful; they can correct redundancy. They preſent proper models for imitation; they point out the principal beauties, which ought to be ſtudied, and the chief faults, which ought to be avoided; and conſequently tend to enlighten Taſte, and to con-

duct Genius from unnatural deviations into its proper channel. Though they are incapable of producing great excellencies; they may at leaſt ſerve to prevent conſiderable miſtakes.

In the education of youth no object has appeared more important to wiſe men in every age, than to excite in them an early reliſh for the entertainments of Taſte. From theſe to the diſcharge of the higher and more important duties of life the tranſition is natural and eaſy. Of thoſe minds, which have this elegant and liberal turn, the moſt pleaſing hopes may be entertained. On the contrary entire inſenſibility to eloquence, poetry, or any of the fine arts, may juſtly be conſidered, as a bad ſymptom in youth; and ſuppoſes them inclined to low gratifications, or capable of being engaged only in the common purſuits of life.

Improvement of Taſte ſeems to be more or leſs connected with every good and virtuous diſpoſition. By giving frequent exerciſe to the tender and humane paſſions a cultivated taſte increaſes ſenſibility; yet

at the ſame time it tends to ſoften the more violent and angry emotions.

Ingenuas didiciſſe fideliter artes
Emollit mores, nec ſinit eſſe feros.

Theſe poliſh'd arts have humaniz'd mankind,
Soften'd the rude, and calm'd the boiſterous mind,

Poetry, Eloquence, and Hiſtory continually exhibit to our view thoſe elevated ſentiments and high examples, which tend to nouriſh in our minds public ſpirit, love of glory, contempt of external fortune, and admiration of every thing truly great, noble, and illuſtrious.

ON

TASTE.

TASTE is "the power of receiving pleaſure or "pain from the beauties or deformities of Nature "and of Art. It is a faculty common in ſome degree to all men. Through the circle of human nature nothing is more general, than the reliſh of Beauty of one kind or other; of what is orderly, proportioned, grand, harmonious, new, or ſprightly. Nor does there prevail leſs generally a diſreliſh of whatever is groſs, diſproportioned, diſorderly, and diſcordant. In children the rudiments of Taſte appear very early in a thouſand inſtances; in their partiality for regular bodies, their fondneſs for pictures and ſtatues, and their warm attachment to whatever is new or aſtoniſhing. The moſt ſtupid peaſants receive pleaſure from tales and ballads, and are delighted with the beautiful appearances of nature in the earth and heavens. Even in the deſerts of America, where human nature appears in its moſt uncultivated ſtate, the ſavages have their ornaments of dreſs, their war and their death ſongs, their harangues and their orators.

The principles of Taſte muſt therefore be deeply founded in the human mind. To have ſome diſcernment of Beauty is no leſs eſſential to man, than to poſſeſs the attributes of ſpeech and reaſon.

Though no human being can be entirely devoid of this faculty, yet it is poſſeſſed in very different degrees. In ſome men only faint glimmerings of Taſte are viſible; the beauties, which they reliſh are of the coarſeſt kind; and of theſe they have only a weak and confuſed impreſſion; while in others Taſte riſes to an acute diſcernment, and a lively enjoyment of the moſt refined beauties.

This inequality of Taſte among men is to be aſcribed undoubtedly in part to the different frame of their natures; to nicer organs, and more delicate internal powers, with which ſome are endued beyond others; yet it is owing ſtill more to culture and education. Taſte is certainly one of the moſt improveable faculties of our nature. We may eaſily be convinced of the truth of this aſſertion by only reflecting on that immenſe ſuperiority, which education and improvement give to civilized above barbarous nations in refinement of Taſte; and on the advantage, which they give in the ſame nation to thoſe, who have ſtudied the liberal arts, above the rude and illiterate vulgar.

Reaſon and good ſenſe have ſo extenſive an influence on all the operations and deciſions of Taſte, that a com-

pletely good Taſte may well be conſidered, as a power compounded of natural ſenſibility to beauty and of improved underſtanding. To be ſatisfied of this, we may obſerve, that the greater part of the productions of Genius are no other, than imitations of nature; repreſentations of the characters, actions, or manners of men. Now the pleaſure, we experience from ſuch imitations or repreſentations, is founded on mere Taſte; but to judge, whether they be properly executed, belongs to the underſtanding, which compares the copy with the original.

In reading, for inſtance, the Æneid of Virgil a great part of our pleaſure ariſes from the proper conduct of the plan or ſtory; from all the parts being joined together with probability and due connection; from the adoption of the characters from nature, the correſpondence of the ſentiments to the characters, and of the ſtyle to the ſentiments. The pleaſure, which is derived from a poem ſo conducted, is felt or enjoyed by Taſte, as an internal ſenſe; but the diſcovery of this conduct in the poem is owing to reaſon; and the more reaſon enables us to diſcover ſuch propriety in the conduct, the greater will be our pleaſure.

The conſtituents of Taſte, when brought to its moſt perfect ſtate, are two, Delicacy and Correctneſs.

Delicacy of Taſte refers principally to the perfection of that natural ſenſibility, on which Taſte is founded.

It implies thoſe finer organs or powers, which enable us to diſcover beauties, that are concealed from a vulgar eye. It is judged of by the ſame marks, that we employ in judging of the delicacy of an external ſenſe. As the goodneſs of the palate is not tried by ſtrong flavours, but by a mixture of ingredients, where, notwithſtanding the confuſion, we remain ſenſible of each; ſo delicacy of internal Taſte appears by a quick and lively ſenſibility to its fineſt, moſt compounded, or moſt latent objects.

Correctneſs of Taſte reſpects the improvement, this faculty receives through its connection with the underſtanding. A man of correct Taſte is one, who is never impoſed on by counterfeit beauties; who carries always in his own mind that ſtandard of good ſenſe, which he employs in judging of every thing. He eſtimates with propriety the relative merit of the ſeveral beauties, which he meets in any work of genius; refers them to their proper claſſes; aſſigns the principles as far, as they can be traced, whence their power of pleaſing is derived; and is pleaſed himſelf preciſely in that degree, in which he ought, and no more.

Taſte is certainly not an arbitrary principle, which is ſubject to the fancy of every individual, and which admits no criterion for determining, whether it be true or falſe. Its foundation is the ſame in every human mind. It is built upon ſentiments and perceptions, which are inſeparable from our nature; and which ge-

nerally operate with the ſame uniformity, as our other intellectual principles. When theſe ſentiments are perverted by ignorance or prejudice, they may be rectified by reaſon. Their ſound and natural ſtate is finally determined by comparing them with the general Taſte of mankind. Let men declaim as much, as they pleaſe, concerning the caprice and uncertainty of Taſte; it is found by experience, that there are beauties, which, if diſplayed in a proper light, have power to command laſting and univerſal admiration. In every compoſition, what intereſts the imagination, and touches the heart, gives pleaſure to all ages and nations. There is a certain ſtring, which being properly ſtruck, the human heart is ſo made, as to accord to it.

Hence the univerſal teſtimony, which the moſt improved nations of the earth through a long ſeries of ages have concurred to beſtow on ſome few works of genius; ſuch, as the Iliad of Homer, and the Æneid of Virgil. Hence the authority, which ſuch works have obtained, as ſtandards of poetical compoſition; ſince by them we are enabled to collect, what the ſenſe of mankind is with reſpect to thoſe beauties, which give them the higheſt pleaſure, and which therefore poetry ought to exhibit. Authority or prejudice may in one age or country give a ſhortlived reputation to an indifferent poet, or a bad artiſt; but, when foreigners, or poſterity examine his works, his faults are diſcovered, and the genuine Taſte

of human nature is ſeen. Time overthrows the illuſions of opinion, but eſtabliſhes the deciſions of nature.

CRITICISM—GENIUS—PLEASURES OF TASTE—SUBLIMITY IN OBJECTS.

TRUE CRITICISM is the application of Taſte and of good ſenſe to the ſeveral fine arts. Its deſign is to diſtinguiſh, what is beautiful and what is faulty in every performance. From particular inſtances it aſcends to general principles; and gradually forms rules or concluſions concerning the ſeveral kinds of Beauty in works of Genius.

Criticiſm is an art, founded entirely on experience; on the obſervation of ſuch beauties, as have been found to pleaſe mankind moſt generally. For example, Ariſtotle's rules concerning the unity of action in dramatic and epic compoſition were not firſt diſcovered by logical reaſoning, and then applied to poetry; but they were deduced from the practice of Homer and Sophocles. They were founded upon obſerving the ſuperior pleaſure, which we derive from the relation of an action, which is one and entire, beyond what we receive from the relation of ſcattered and unconnected facts.

A ſuperior Genius indeed will of himſelf, uninſtructed, compoſe in ſuch manner, as is agreeable to the moſt important rules of Criticiſm; for, as theſe rules are founded in nature, nature will frequent-

ly ſuggeſt them in practice. Homer was acquainted with no ſyſtem of the art of poetry. Guided by Genius alone, he compoſed in verſe a regular ſtory, which all ſucceeding ages have admired. This however is no argument againſt the uſefulneſs of Criticiſm. For, ſince no human genius is perfect, there is no writer, who may not receive aſſiſtance from critical obſervations upon the beauties and faults of thoſe, who have gone before him. No rules indeed can ſupply the defects of genius, or inſpire it, where it is wanting; but they may often guide it into its proper channel; they may correct its extravagancies, and teach it the moſt juſt and proper imitation of nature. Critical rules are intended chiefly to point out the faults, which ought to be avoided. We muſt be indebted to nature for the production of eminent beauties.

GENIUS is a word, which in common acceptation extends much farther, than to objects of Taſte. It ſignifies that talent or aptitude, which we receive from nature, in order to excel in any one thing whatever. A man is ſaid to have a genius for mathematics as well, as a genius for poetry; a genius for war, for politics, or for any mechanical employment.

Genius may be greatly improved by art and ſtudy; but by them alone it cannot be acquired. As it is a higher faculty than Taſte, it is ever, according to the common frugality of nature, more limited in the ſphere of its operations. There are per-

ſons, not unfrequently to be met, who have an excellent Taſte in ſeveral of the polite arts; ſuch, as muſic, poetry, painting, and eloquence; but an excellent performer in all theſe arts is very ſeldom found; or rather is not to be looked for. A univerſal Genius, or one who is equally and indifferently inclined toward ſeveral different profeſſions and arts, is not likely to excel in any. Although there may be ſome few exceptions, yet in general it is true, that, when the mind is wholly directed toward ſome one object excluſively of others, there is the faireſt proſpect of eminence in that, whatever it may be. Extreme heat can be produced, only when the rays converge to a ſingle point. Young perſons are highly intereſted in this remark; ſince it may teach them to examine with care, and to purſue with ardor that path, which nature has marked out for their peculiar exertions.

The nature of Taſte, the nature and importance of Criticiſm, and the diſtinction between Taſte and Genius, being thus explained; the ſources of the Pleaſures of Taſte ſhall next be conſidered. Here a very extenſive field is opened; no leſs, than all the Pleaſures of the Imagination, as they are generally called, whether afforded us by natural objects, or by imitations and deſcriptions of them. It is not however neceſſary to the purpoſe of the preſent work, that all theſe be examined fully; the pleaſure, which we receive from diſcourſe or writing, being the principal object of them. Our de-

ſign is to give ſome opening into the Pleaſures of Taſte in general, and to inſiſt more particularly upon Sublimity and Beauty.

We are far from having yet attained any ſyſtem concerning this ſubject. A regular inquiry into it was firſt attempted by Mr. Addiſon in his Eſſay on the Pleaſures of the Imagination. By him theſe Pleaſures are ranged under three heads, Beauty, Grandeur, and Novelty. His ſpeculations on this ſubject, if not remarkably profound, are very beautiful and entertaining; and he has the merit of having diſcovered a track, which was before untrodden. Since his time the advances, made in this part of philoſophical criticiſm, are not conſiderable; which is owing doubtleſs to that thinneſs and ſubtilty, which are diſcovered to be properties of all the feelings of Taſte. It is difficult to enumerate the ſeveral objects, which give pleaſure to Taſte; it is more difficult to define all thoſe, which have been diſcovered, and to range them in proper claſſes; and, when we would proceed farther, and inveſtigate the efficient cauſes of the pleaſure, which we receive from ſuch objects, here we find ourſelves at the greateſt loſs. For example, we all learn by experience that ſome figures of bodies appear more beautiful than others; on farther inquiry we diſcover that the regularity of ſome figures and the graceful variety of others are the foundation of the beauty, which we diſcern in them; but, when we endeavour to go a ſtep beyond this, and inquire, why regularity and

variety produce in our minds the ſenſation of beauty; any reaſon, we can aſſign, is extremely imperfect. Thoſe firſt principles of internal ſenſation nature appears to have ſtudiouſly concealed.

It is ſome conſolation however, that, although the efficient cauſe is obſcure, the final cauſe of thoſe ſenſations lies commonly more open; and here we muſt obſerve the ſtrong impreſſion, which the powers of Taſte and Imagination are calculated to give us of the benevolence of our Creator. By theſe powers he hath widely enlarged the ſphere of the pleaſures of human life; and thoſe too of a kind the moſt pure and innocent. The neceſſary purpoſes of life might have been anſwered, though our ſenſes of ſeeing and hearing had only ſerved to diſtinguiſh external objects, without giving us any of thoſe refined and delicate ſenſations of beauty and grandeur, with which we are now ſo much delighted.

The pleaſure, which ariſes from ſublimity or grandeur, deſerves to be fully conſidered; becauſe it has a character more preciſe and diſtinctly marked, than any other of the pleaſures of the imagination, and becauſe it coincides more directly with our main ſubject. The ſimpleſt form of external grandeur is ſeen in the vaſt and boundleſs proſpects, preſented to us by nature; ſuch, as widely extended plains, of which the eye can find no limits; the firmament of heaven; or the boundleſs expanſe of the ocean. All vaſtneſs produces the impreſſion

of ſublimity. Space however, extended in length, makes not ſo ſtrong an impreſſion, as height or depth. Though a boundleſs plain is a grand object; yet a lofty mountain, to which we look up, or an awful precipice or tower, whence we look down on objects below, is ſtill more ſo. The exceſſive grandeur of the firmament ariſes from its height, added to its boundleſs extent; and that of the ocean, not from its extent alone, but from the continual motion and irreſiſtible force of that maſs of waters. Wherever ſpace is concerned, it is evident, that amplitude or greatneſs of extent in one dimenſion or other is neceſſary to grandeur. Remove all bounds from any object, and you immediately render it ſublime. Hence infinite ſpace, endleſs numbers, and eternal duration fill the mind with great ideas.

The moſt copious ſource of ſublime ideas ſeems to be derived from the exertion of great power and force. Hence the grandeur of earthquakes and burning mountains; of great conflagrations; of the boiſterous ocean; of the tempeſtuous ſtorm; of thunder and lightning; and of all the unuſual violence of the elements. A ſtream, which glides along gently within its banks, is a beautiful object; but, when it ruſhes down with the impetuoſity and noiſe of a torrent, it immediately becomes a ſublime one. A race horſe is viewed with pleaſure; but it is the war horſe, "whoſe neck is clothed with "thunder," that conveys grandeur in its idea. The engagement of two powerful armies, as it is the higheſt exertion of human ſtrength, combines various ſources of

the ſublime; and has conſequently been ever conſidered, as one of the moſt ſtriking and magnificent ſpectacles, which can be either preſented to the eye, or exhibited to the imagination in deſcription.

All ideas of the ſolemn and awful kind, and even bordering on the terrible, tend greatly to aſſiſt the ſublime; ſuch, as darkneſs, ſolitude, and ſilence. The firmament, when filled with ſtars, ſcattered in infinite numbers and with ſplendid profuſion, ſtrikes the imagination with more awful grandeur, than when we behold it enlightened by all the ſplendor of the ſun. The deep ſound of a great bell, or the ſtriking of a great clock, is at any time grand and awful; but, when heard amid the ſilence and ſtillneſs of night, they become doubly ſo. Darkneſs is very generally applied for adding ſublimity to all our ideas of the Deity. "He maketh darkneſs his pavilion; he dwelleth in the "thick cloud." Thus Milton—

———How oft amid
Thick clouds and dark does Heaven's allruling Sire
Chooſe to reſide, his glory unobſcured;
And with the majeſty of darkneſs round
Circles his Throne———

Obſcurity is favorable to the ſublime. The deſcriptions, given us of appearances of ſupernatural beings, carry ſome ſublimity; though the conception, which they afford us, be confuſed and indiſtinct. Their ſublimity ariſes from the ideas, which they always convey,

of ſuperior power and might connected with awful obſcurity. No ideas, it is evident, are ſo ſublime, as thoſe derived from the Supreme Being, the moſt unknown, yet the greateſt of all objects; the infinity of whoſe nature and the eternity of whoſe duration, added to the omnipotence of his power, though they ſurpaſs our conceptions, yet exalt them to the higheſt.

Diſorder is alſo very compatible with grandeur; nay, frequently heightens it. Few things, which are exactly regular and methodical, appear ſublime. We ſee the limits on every ſide; we feel ourſelves confined; there is no room for any conſiderable exertion of the mind. Though exact proportion of parts enters often into the beautiful, it is much diſregarded in the ſublime. A great maſs of rocks, thrown together by the hand of nature with wildneſs and confuſion, ſtrikes the mind with more grandeur, than if they had been adjuſted to each other with the moſt accurate ſymmetry.

There yet remains one claſs of Sublime Objects to be mentioned, which may be termed the Moral or Sentimental Sublime, ariſing from certain exertions of the mind; from certain affections and actions of our fellow creatures. Theſe will be found to be chiefly of that claſs, which comes under the name of Magnanimity or Heroiſm; and they produce an effect very ſimilar to what is produced by a view of grand objects in nature, filling the mind with admiration, and raiſing it above itſelf. Wherever in ſome critical and dangerous ſitua-

tion we behold a man uncommonly intrepid, and reſting ſolely upon himſelf; ſuperior to paſſion and to fear; animated by ſome great principle to contempt of popular opinion, of ſelfiſh intereſt, of dangers, or of death; we are there ſtruck with a ſenſe of the ſublime. Thus Porus, when taken by Alexander after a gallant defence, being aſked, in what manner he would be treated; anſwered, "Like a King;" and Cæſar chiding the pilot, who was afraid to ſet out with him in a ſtorm, "Quid times? Cæſarem vehis," are good inſtances of the Sentimental Sublime.

The ſublime in natural and in moral objects is preſented to us in one view, and compared together, in the following beautiful paſſage of Akenſide's Pleaſures of the Imagination.

Look then abroad through nature to the range
Of planets, ſuns, and adamantine ſpheres,
Wheeling, unſhaken, thro' the void immenſe;
And ſpeak, O Man; does this capacious ſcene
With half that kindling majeſty dilate
Thy ſtrong conception, as when Brutus roſe
Refulgent from the ſtroke of Cæſar's fate
Amid the crowd of Patriots; and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove,
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and ſhook his crimſon ſteel,
And bade the father of his country hail!
For lo the tyrant proſtrate on the duſt;
And Rome again is free.———

It has been imagined by an ingenious Author, that terror is the ſource of the ſublime; and that no objects have this character, but ſuch, as produce impreſſions of pain and danger. Many terrible objects are indeed highly ſublime; nor does grandeur refuſe alliance with the idea of danger. But the ſublime does not conſiſt wholly in modes of danger and pain. In many grand objects there is not the leaſt coincidence with terror; as in the magnificent proſpect of widely extended plains, and of the ſtarry firmament; or in the moral diſpoſitions and ſentiments, which we contemplate with high admiration. In many painful and terrible objects alſo, it is evident, there is no ſort of grandeur. The amputation of a limb, or the bite of a ſnake, is in the higheſt degree terrible; but they are deſtitute of all claim whatever to ſublimity. It ſeems juſt to allow that mighty force or power, whether attended by terror or not, whether employed in protecting or alarming us, has a better title, than any thing yet mentioned, to be the fundamental quality of the ſublime. There appears to be no ſublime object, into the idea of which ſtrength and force either enter not directly, or are not at leaſt intimately aſſociated by conducting our thoughts to ſome aſtoniſhing power, as concerned in the production of the object.

SUBLIMITY IN WRITING.

THE foundation of the Sublime in Compoſition muſt always be laid in the nature of the object deſcribed. Unleſs it be ſuch an object, as, if preſented to our ſight, if exhibited to us in reality, would excite ideas of that elevating, that awful, and magnificent kind, which we call Sublime; the deſcription, however finely drawn, is not entitled to be placed under this claſs. This excludes all objects, which are merely beautiful, gay or elegant. Beſide the object muſt not only in itſelf be ſublime, but it muſt be placed before us in ſuch a light, as is beſt calculated to give us a clear and full impreſſion of it; it muſt be deſcribed with ſtrength, conciſeneſs, and ſimplicity. This depends chiefly upon the lively impreſſion, which the poet or orator has of the object, which he exhibits; and upon his being deeply affected and animated by the ſublime idea, which he would convey. If his own feeling be languid, he can never inſpire his reader with any ſtrong emotion. Inſtances, which on this ſubject are extremely neceſſary, will clearly ſhow the importance of all theſe requiſites.

It is chiefly among antient authors, that we are to look for the moſt ſtriking inſtances of the ſublime. The early ages of the world and the uncultivated ſtate of ſociety were peculiarly favorable to the emotions of ſublimity. The genius of men was then very prone to admiration and aſtoniſhment. Meeting continually new and ſtrange objects, their imagination was kept glowing,

and their paſſions were often raiſed to the utmoſt. They thought and expreſſed themſelves boldly without reſtraint. In the progreſs of ſociety the genius and manners of men have undergone a change more favorable to accuracy, than to ſtrength or ſublimity.

Of all writings, antient or modern, the Sacred Scriptures afford the moſt ſtriking inſtances of the ſublime. In them the deſcriptions of the Supreme Being are wonderfully noble, both from the grandeur of the object, and the manner of repreſenting it. What an aſſemblage of awful and ſublime ideas is preſented to us in that paſſage of the eighteenth pſalm, where an appearance of the Almighty is deſcribed! "In my diſtreſs I "called upon the Lord; he heard my voice out of his "temple, and my cry came before him. Then the "earth ſhook and trembled; the foundations of the "hills were moved; becauſe he was wroth. He bow"ed the heavens, and came down, and darkneſs was "under his feet; and he did ride upon a cherub, and "did fly; yea he did fly upon the wings of the wind. "He made darkneſs his ſecret place; his pavilion "round about him were dark waters and thick clouds "of the ſky." The circumſtances of darkneſs and terror are here applied with propriety and ſucceſs for heightening the ſublime.

The celebrated inſtance, given by Longinus, from Moſes, "God ſaid, let there be light; and there was "light," belongs to the true ſublime; and its ſublimi-

ty arises from the strong conception, it conveys, of an effort of power producing its effect with the utmost speed and facility. A similar thought is magnificently expanded in the following passage of Isaiah (chap. xxiv. 24, 27, 28.) "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, "and he, that formed thee from the womb; I am "the Lord, that maketh all things; that stretcheth "forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the "earth by myself; that saith to the deep, be dry, and "I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, he is "my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; "even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built; and to "the Temple, thy foundation shall be laid."

Homer has in all ages been universally admired for sublimity; and he is indebted for much of his grandeur to that native and unaffected simplicity, which characterizes his manner. His descriptions of conflicting armies; the spirit, the fire, the rapidity, which he throws into his battles, present to every reader of the Iliad frequent instances of sublime writing. The majesty of his warlike scenes is often heightened in a high degree by the introduction of the gods. In the twentieth book, where all the gods take part in the engagement, according as they severally favor either the Grecians or the Trojans, the poet appears to put forth one of his highest efforts, and the description rises into the most awful magnificence. All nature appears in commotion. Jupiter thunders in the heavens; Neptune strikes the earth with his trident; the ships, the city, and the

mountains ſhake; the earth trembles to its centre; Pluto ſtarts from his throne, fearing, leſt the ſecrets of the infernal regions ſhould be laid open to the view of mortals. We ſhall tranſcribe Mr. Pope's tranſlation of this paſſage; which, though inferior to the original, is highly animated and ſublime.

But, when the Powers deſcending ſwell'd the fight,
Then tumult roſe, fierce rage, and pale affright.
Now thro' the trembling ſhores Minerva calls,
And now ſhe thunders from the Grecian walls.
Mars, hovering o'er his Troy, his terror ſhrouds
In gloomy tempeſts, and a night of clouds;
Now thro' each Trojan heart he fury pours
With voice divine from Ilion's topmoſt towers;
Above the Sire of gods his thunder rolls,
And peals on peals redoubled rend the poles.
Beneath ſtern Neptune ſhakes the ſolid ground,
The foreſts wave, the mountains nod around;
Thro' all her ſummits tremble Ida's woods,
And from their ſources boil her hundred floods:
Troy's turrets totter on the rocking plain,
And the toſs'd navies beat the heaving main;
Deep in the diſmal region of the dead
The infernal Monarch rear'd his horrid head,
Leap't from his throne, leſt Neptune's arm ſhould lay
His dark dominions open to the day,
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,
Abhorr'd by men, and dreadful e'en to Gods.
Such wars the Immortals wage; ſuch horrors rend
The world's vaſt concave, when the gods contend.

Conciſeneſs and ſimplicity will ever be found eſſential

to ſublime writing. Simplicity is properly oppoſed to ſtudied and profuſe ornament; and conciſeneſs to ſuperfluous expreſſion. It will eaſily appear, why a defect either in conciſeneſs or ſimplicity is peculiarly hurtful to the ſublime. The emotion excited in the mind by ſome great or noble object, raiſes it conſiderably above its common pitch. A ſpecies of enthuſiaſm is produced, extremely pleaſing, while it laſts; but the mind is tending every moment to ſink into its ordinary ſtate. When an author has brought us, or is endeavouring to bring us into this ſtate, if he multiply words unneceſſarily; if he deck the ſublime object on all ſides with glittering ornaments; nay, if he throw in any one decoration, which falls in the leaſt below the principal image; that moment he changes the key; he relaxes the tenſion of the mind; the ſtrength of the feeling is emaſculated; the Beautiful may remain; but the ſublime is extinguiſhed. Homer's deſcription of the nod of Jupiter, as ſhaking the heavens, has been admired in all ages, as wonderfully ſublime. Literally tranſlated, it runs thus; "He ſpoke, and bending his ſable brows "gave the awful nod; while he ſhook the celeſtial locks "of his immortal head, all Olympus was ſhaken." Mr. Pope tranſlates it thus;

He ſpoke; and awful bends his ſable brows,
Shakes his ambroſial curls, and gives the nod,
The ſtamp of fate, and ſanction of a god;
High heaven with trembling the dread ſignal took,
And all Olympus to its centre ſhook.

The image is expanded, and attempted to be beautified; but in reality it is weakened. The third line, "The ſtamp of fate, and ſanction of a God," is entirely expletive, and introduced only to fill up the rhyme; for it interrupts the deſcription, and clogs the image. For the ſame reaſon Jupiter is repreſented, as ſhaking his locks, before he gives the nod; "Shakes his ambroſial curls, "and gives the nod;" which is trifling and inſignificant; whereas in the original the ſhaking of his hair is the conſequence of his nod, and makes a happy picturesque circumſtance in the deſcription.

The boldneſs, freedom, and variety of our blank verſe are infinitely more propitious, than rhyme, to all kinds of ſublime poetry. The fulleſt proof of this is afforded by Milton; an author, whoſe genius led him peculiarly to the ſublime. The firſt and ſecond books of Paradiſe Loſt are continued examples of it. Take for inſtance the following noted deſcription of Satan, after his fall appearing at the head of his infernal hoſts;

——————He above the reſt,
In ſhape and geſture proudly eminent,
Stood, like a tower; his form had not yet loſt
All her original brightneſs, nor appeared
Leſs, than Archangel ruined, and the exceſs
Of glory obſcured; As when the ſun, new riſen,
Looks through the horizontal miſty air,
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipſe, diſaſtrous twilight ſheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change

Perplexes monarchs. Darkened ſo, yet ſhone
Above them all the Archangel.

Here various ſources of the ſublime are joined together; the principal object ſuperlatively great; a high, ſuperior nature, fallen indeed, but raiſing itſelf againſt diſtreſs; the grandeur of the principal object heightened by connecting it with ſo noble an idea, as that of the ſun ſuffering an eclipſe; this picture, ſhaded with all thoſe images of change and trouble, of darkneſs and terror, which coincide ſo exquiſitely with the ſublime emotion; and the whole expreſſed in a ſtyle and verſification eaſy, natural, and ſimple, but magnificent.

Beſide ſimplicity and conciſeneſs ſtrength is eſſentially neceſſary to ſublime writing. Strength of deſcription proceeds in a great meaſure from conciſeneſs; but it implies ſomething more, namely a judicious choice of circumſtances in the deſcription; ſuch, as will exhibit the object in its full and moſt ſtriking point of view. For every object has ſeveral faces, by which it may be preſented to us, according to the circumſtances, with which we ſurround it; and it will appear ſuperlatively ſublime, or not, in proportion, as theſe circumſtances are happily choſen, and of a ſublime kind. In this the great art of the writer conſiſts; and indeed the principal difficulty of ſublime deſcription. If the deſcription be too general, and diveſted of circumſtances; the object is ſhewn in a faint light, and makes a feeble impreſſion, or no impreſſion, on the reader. At the ſame time, if

any trivial or improper circumſtances be mingled, the whole is degraded.

The nature of that emotion, which is aimed at by ſublime deſcription, admits no mediocrity, and cannot ſubſiſt in a middle ſtate; but muſt either highly tranſport us; or, if unſucceſsful in the execution, leave us exceedingly diſguſted. We attempt to riſe with the writer; the imagination is awakened, and, put upon the ſtretch; but it ought to be ſupported; and, if in the midſt of its effort it be deſerted unexpectedly, it falls with a painful ſhock. When Milton in his battle of the Angels deſcribes them, as tearing up mountains, and throwing them at one another; there are in his deſcription, as Mr. Addiſon has remarked, no circumſtances, but what are truly ſublime:

> From their foundations loosening to and fro,
> They pluck'd the seated hills with all their load,
> Rocks, waters, woods; and by the shaggy tops
> Uplifting bore them in their hands.———

This idea of the giants throwing the mountains, which is in itſelf ſo grand, Claudian renders burleſque and ridiculous by the ſingle circumſtance of one of his giants with the mountain Ida upon his ſhoulders, and a river, which flowed from the mountain, running down the giant's back, as he held it up in that poſture. Virgil in his deſcription of mount Ætna is guilty of a ſlight inaccuracy of this kind. After ſeveral magnificent images the poet concludes with perſonifying the mountain under this figure,

———" Eructans viſcera cum gemitu"———

" belching up its bowels with a groan ;" which by making the mountain reſemble a ſick or drunken perſon degrades the majeſty of the deſcription. The debaſing effect of this idea will appear in a ſtronger light from obſerving, what figure it makes in a poem of Sir Richard Blackmore ; who though an extravagant perverſity of taſte ſelected it for the principal circumſtance in his deſcription ; and thereby, as Dr. Arburthnot humorouſly obſerves, repreſented the mountain, as in a fit of the cholic.

Ætna and all the burning mountains find
Their kindled ſtores with inbred ſtorms of wind
Blown up to rage, and roaring out complain,
As torn with inward gripes and torturing pain ;
Laboring they caſt their dreadful vomit round,
And with their melted bowels ſpread the ground.

Such inſtances ſhow how much the ſublime depends upon a proper ſelection of circumſtances ; and with how great care every circumſtance muſt be avoided, which by approaching in the ſmalleſt degree to the mean, or even to the gay or trifling, changes the tone of the emotion.

What is commonly called the ſublime ſtyle, is for the moſt part a very bad one, and has no relation whatever to the true Sublime. Writers are apt to imagine that ſplendid words, accumulated epithets, and a certain ſwelling kind of expreſſion, by riſing above what is cuſ-

tomary or vulgar, conſtitutes the ſublime; yet nothing is in reality more falſe. In genuine inſtances of ſublime writing nothing of this kind appears. "God ſaid, "let there be light; and there was light." This is ſtriking and ſublime; but put it into what is commonly called the ſublime ſtyle, "The Sovereign Arbiter of na- "ture by the potent energy of a ſingle word commanded "the light to exiſt;" and, as Boileau juſtly obſerved, the ſtyle is indeed raiſed, but the thought is degraded. In general it may be obſerved, that the ſublime lies in the thought, not in the expreſſion; and, when the thought is really noble, it will generally clothe itſelf in a native majeſty of language.

The faults, oppoſite to the ſublime, are principally two, the Frigid and the Bombaſt. The Frigid conſiſts in degrading an object or ſentiment, which is ſublime in itſelf, by a mean conception of it; or by a weak, low, or puerile deſcription of it. This betrays entire abſence, or at leaſt extreme poverty of genius. The Bombaſt lies in forcing a common or trivial object out of its rank, and in laboring to raiſe it into the ſublime; or in attempting to exalt a ſublime object beyond all natural bounds.

BEAUTY AND OTHER PLEASURES OF TASTE.

BEAUTY next to Sublimity affords the higheſt pleaſure to the imagination. The emotion, which it raiſes, is eaſily diſtinguiſhed from that of ſublimity. It is of a calmer kind; more gentle and ſoothing; does not elevate the mind ſo much, but produces a pleaſing ſerenity. Sublimity excites a feeling, too violent to be laſting; the pleaſure, proceeding from Beauty, admits longer duration. It extends alſo to a much greater variety of objects, than ſublimity; to a variety indeed ſo great, that the ſenſations, which beautiful objects excite, differ exceedingly, not in degree only, but alſo in kind, from each other. Hence no word is uſed in a more undetermined ſignification, than Beauty. It is applied to almoſt every external object, which pleaſes the eye or the ear; to many of the graces of writing; to ſeveral diſpoſitions of the mind; nay, to ſome objects of abſtract ſcience. We ſpeak frequently of a beautiful tree or flower; a beautiful poem; a beautiful character; and a beautiful theorem in mathematics.

Color ſeems to afford the ſimpleſt inſtance of Beauty. Aſſociation of ideas, it is probable, has ſome influence on the pleaſure, which we receive from colors. Green, for example, may appear more beautiful from being connected in our ideas with rural ſcenes and proſpects; white with innocence; blue with the ſerenity of the ſky. Independently of aſſociations of this ſort all, that we

can farther obſerve reſpecting colors, is that thoſe, choſen for Beauty, are commonly delicate rather, than glaring. Such are the feathers of ſeveral kinds of birds, the leaves of flowers, and the fine variation of colors, ſhown by the ſky at the riſing and ſitting of the ſun.

Figure opens to us forms of Beauty more complex and diverſified. Regularity firſt offers itſelf, as a ſource of Beauty. By a regular figure is meant one, which we perceive to be formed according to ſome certain rule, and not left arbitrary or looſe in the conſtruction of its parts. Thus a circle, a ſquare, a triangle, or a hexagon, gives pleaſure to the eye by its regularity, as a beautiful figure; yet a certain graceful variety is found to be a much more powerful principle of Beauty. Regularity ſeems to appear beautiful to us chiefly, if not entirely, on account of its ſuggeſting the ideas of fitneſs, propriety, and uſe, which have always a more intimate connection with orderly and proportioned forms, than with thoſe, which appear not conſtructed according to any certain rule. Nature, who is the moſt graceful artiſt, hath in all her ornamental works purſued variety with an apparent neglect of regularity. Cabinets, doors, and windows are made after a regular form, in cubes and parallelograms, with exact proportion of parts; and thus formed they pleaſe the eye for this juſt reaſon, that, being works of uſe, they are by ſuch figures better adapted to the ends, for which they were deſigned. But plants, flowers, and leaves are full of variety and diverſity. A ſtraight canal

is an inſipid figure, when compared with the meanders of a river. Cones and pyramids have their degree of beauty; but trees, growing in their natural wildneſs, have infinitely more beauty, than when trimmed into pyramids and cones. The appartments of a houſe muſt be diſpoſed with regularity for the convenience of its inhabitants; but a garden, which is intended merely for beauty, would be extremely diſguſting, if it had as much uniformity and order, as a dwelling houſe.

Motion affords another ſource of Beauty, diſtinct from figure. Motion of itſelf is pleaſing; and bodies in motion are, "cæteris paribus," univerſally preferred to thoſe at reſt. Only gentle motion however belongs to the Beautiful; for, when it is ſwift, or very powerful; ſuch, as that of a torrent, it partakes of the ſublime. The motion of a bird gliding through the air is exquiſitely beautiful; but the ſwiftneſs, with which lightning darts through the ſky, is magnificent and aſtoniſhing. Here it is neceſſary to obſerve, that the ſenſations of ſublime and beautiful are not always diſtinguiſhed by very diſtant boundaries; but are capable in many inſtances of approaching toward each other. Thus a gently running ſtream is one of the moſt beautiful objects in nature; but, as it ſwells gradually into a great river, the beautiful by degrees is loſt in the ſublime. A young tree is a beautiful object; a ſpreading antient oak is a venerable and ſublime one. To return, however, to the beauty of motion, it will be found to hold very generally, that motion in a ſtraight line is not ſo beautiful,

as in a waving direction; and motion upward is commonly more pleaſing, than motion downward. The eaſy, curling motion of flame and ſmoke is an object ſingularly agreeable. Hogarth obſerves very ingeniouſly, that all the common and neceſſary motions for the buſineſs of life are performed in ſtraight or plain lines; but that all the graceful and ornamental movements are made in curve lines; an obſervation, worthy of the attention of thoſe, who ſtudy the grace of geſture and action.

Color, figure, and motion, though ſeparate principles of Beauty, yet in many beautiful objects meet together, and thereby render the beauty greater and more complex. Thus in flowers, trees, and animals we are entertained at once with the delicacy of the color, with the gracefulneſs of the figure, and ſometimes alſo with the motion of the object. The moſt complete aſſemblage of beautiful objects, which can be found, is preſented by a rich natural landſcape, where there is a ſufficient variety of objects; fields in verdure, ſcattered trees and flowers, running water, and animals grazing. If to theſe be added ſome of the productions of art, ſuitable to ſuch a ſcene; as a bridge with arches over a river, ſmoke riſing from cottages in the midſt of trees, and a diſtant view of a fine building ſeen by the riſing ſun; we then enjoy in the higheſt perfection that gay, cheerful, and placid ſenſation, which characterizes Beauty.

The beauty of the human countenance is more com-

plex, than any, we have yet examined. It comprehends the Beauty of color, ariſing from the delicate ſhades of the complexion; and the Beauty of figure, ariſing from the lines, which conſtitute different features of the face. But the principal Beauty of the countenance depends upon a myſterious expreſſion, which it conveys, of the qualities of the mind; of good ſenſe, or good humor; of candor, benevolence, ſenſibility, or other amiable diſpoſitions. It may be obſerved, that there are certain qualities of the mind, which, whether expreſſed in the countenance, or by words, or by actions, always raiſe in us a feeling ſimilar to that of Beauty. There are two great claſſes of moral qualities; one is of the high and the great virtues, which require extraordinary efforts, and is founded on dangers and ſufferings; as heroiſm, magnanimity, contempt of pleaſures, and contempt of death. Theſe produce in the ſpectator an emotion of ſublimity and grandeur. The other claſs is chiefly of the ſocial virtues; and ſuch, as are of a ſofter and gentler kind; as compaſſion, mildneſs, and generoſity. Theſe excite in the beholder a ſenſation of pleaſure, ſo nearly allied to that excited by beautiful external objects, that, though of a more exalted nature, it may with propriety be claſſed under the ſame head.

Beauty of writing in its more definite ſenſe characterizes a particular manner; ſignifying a certain grace and amenity in the turn either of ſtyle or ſentiment, by which ſome authors are particularly diſtinguiſhed. In this ſenſe it denotes a manner neither remarkably ſub-

time, nor vehemently paſſionate, nor uncommonly ſparkling; but ſuch, as excites in the reader an emotion of the placid kind, reſembling that, which is raiſed by contemplation of beautiful objects in nature; which neither lifts the mind very high, nor agitates it to exceſs; but ſpreads over the imagination a pleaſing ſerenity. Addiſon is a writer of this character, and one of the moſt proper examples of it. Fenelon, the author of Telemachus, is another example. Virgil alſo, though very capable of riſing occaſionally into the ſublime, yet generally is diſtinguiſhed by the character of beauty and grace rather, than of ſublimity. Among orators Cicero has more of the beautiful, than Demoſthenes, whoſe genius led him wholly toward vehemence and ſtrength.

So much it is neceſſary to have ſaid upon the ſubject of Beauty; ſince next to ſublimity it is the moſt copious ſource of the Pleaſures of Taſte. But objects delight the imagination not only by appearing under the forms of ſublime or beautiful; they likewiſe derive their power of giving it pleaſure from ſeveral other principles.

Novelty, for example, has been mentioned by Addiſon, and by every writer on this ſubject. An object, which has no other merit, than that of being new, by this quality alone raiſes in the mind a vivid and an agreeable emotion. Hence that paſſion of curioſity, which prevails ſo generally in mankind. Objects and ideas, which have been long familiar, make

too faint an impreſſion, to give an agreeable exerciſe to our faculties. New and ſtrange objects rouſe the mind from its dormant ſtate by giving it a ſudden and pleaſing impulſe. Hence in a great meaſure the entertainment, we receive from fiction and romance. The emotion, raiſed by Novelty, is of a more lively and awakening nature, than that produced by Beauty; but much ſhorter in its duration. For, if the object have in itſelf no charms to hold our attention, the gloſs, ſpread over it by Novelty, ſoon wears off.

Imitation is another ſource of pleaſure to Taſte. This gives riſe to what Addiſon terms the Secondary Pleaſures of Imagination, which form a very extenſive claſs. For all imitation affords ſome Pleaſure to the mind; not only the imitation of beautiful or ſublime objects by recalling the original ideas of beauty or grandeur, which ſuch objects themſelves exhibited; but even objects, which have neither beauty, nor grandeur; nay ſome, which are terrible or deformed, give us pleaſure in a ſecondary or repreſented view.

The pleaſures of melody and harmony belong alſo to Taſte. There is no delightful ſenſation, we receive either from beauty or ſublimity, which is not capable of being heightened by the power of muſical ſound. Hence the charm of poetical numbers; and even of the concealed and looſer meaſures of proſe. Wit, humor, and ridicule open likewiſe a variety of pleaſures to

Taſte, altogether different from any, that have yet been conſidered.

At preſent it is not neceſſary to purſue any farther the ſubject of the Pleaſures of Taſte. We have opened ſome of the general principles; it is time now to apply them to our chief ſubject. If it be aſked, to what claſs of thoſe Pleaſures of Taſte, which have been enumerated, that pleaſure is to be referred, which we receive from poetry, eloquence, or fine writing? The anſwer is, not to any one, but to them all. This peculiar advantage writing and diſcourſe poſſeſs; they encompaſs a large and fruitful field on all ſides, and have power to exhibit in great perfection, not a ſingle ſet of objects only, but almoſt the whole of thoſe, which give pleaſure to taſte and imagination; whether that pleaſure ariſe from ſublimity, from beauty in its various forms, from deſign and art, from moral ſentiment, from novelty, from harmony, from wit, humor, or ridicule. To whichſoever of theſe a perſon's taſte is directed; from ſome writer or other he has it always in his power to receive the gratification of it.

It has been uſual among critical writers to treat of diſcourſe, as the chief of all the imitative arts. They compare it with painting and with ſculpture, and in many reſpects prefer it juſtly before them. But we muſt diſtinguiſh between imitation and deſcription. Words have no natural reſemblance of the ideas or ob-

jects, which they signify; but a statue or picture has a natural likeness of the original.

As far however, as a poet or historian introduces into his work persons really speaking, and by words, which he puts into their mouths, represents the conversation, which they might be supposed to hold; so far his art may be called imitative; and this is the case in all dramatic composition. But in narrative or descriptive works it cannot with propriety be so called. Who, for example, would call Virgil's description of a tempest in the first Eneid an imitation of a storm? If we heard of the imitation of a battle, we might naturally think of some mock fight, or representation of a battle on the stage; but should never imagine it meant one of Homer's descriptions in the Iliad. It must be allowed at the same time, that imitation and description agree in their principal effect, that of recalling by external signs the ideas of things, which we do not see. But, though in this they coincide; yet it should be remembered, that the terms themselves are not synonimous; that they import different means of producing the same end; and consequently make different impressions on the mind.

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF LANGUAGE.

TO form an adequate idea of the Origin of Language, we must contemplate the circumstances of mankind in their earliest and rudest state. They were

then a wandering, ſcattered race; no ſociety among them except families; and family ſociety alſo very imperfect, as their mode of living, by hunting or paſturage, muſt have ſeparated them frequently from each other. In ſuch a condition, how could any one ſet of ſounds or words be univerſally agreed on, as the ſigns of their ideas? Suppoſing that a few, whom chance or neceſſity threw together, agreed by ſome means upon certain ſigns; yet by what authority could theſe be ſo propagated among other tribes or families, as to grow up into a language? One would imagine that men muſt have been previouſly gathered together in conſiderable numbers, before language could be fixed and extended; and yet on the other hand there ſeems to have been an abſolute neceſſity of ſpeech previouſly to the formation of ſociety. For by what bond could a multitude of men be kept together, or be connected in proſecution of any common intereſt, before by the aſſiſtance of ſpeech they could communicate their wants and intentions to each other? So that how ſociety could ſubſiſt previouſly to language, and how words could riſe into language before the formation of ſociety, ſeem to be points attended with equal difficulty. When we conſider farther that curious analogy, which prevails in the conſtruction of almoſt all languages, and that deep and ſubtile logic, on which they are founded; difficulties increaſe ſo much upon on all ſides, that there ſeems to be no ſmall reaſon for referring the origin of all language to divine inſpiration.

But, ſuppoſing language to have a divine original, we cannot imagine that a perfect ſyſtem of it was at once given to man. It is much more natural to ſuppoſe that God taught our firſt parents only ſuch language, as ſuited their preſent occaſions; leaving them, as he did in other reſpects, to enlarge and improve it, as their future neceſſities ſhould require. Conſequently thoſe rudiments of ſpeech muſt have been poor and narrow; and we are at liberty to inquire, in what manner, and by what ſteps, language advanced to the ſtate, in which we now find it.

Should we ſuppoſe a period exiſted, before words were invented or known; it is evident, that men could have no other method of communicating their feelings, than by the cries of paſſion, accompanied by ſuch motions and geſtures, as were farther expreſſive of emotion. Theſe indeed are the only ſigns, which nature teaches all men, and which are underſtood by all. One, who ſaw another going into ſome place, where he himſelf had been frightened, or expoſed to danger, and who wiſhed to warn his neighbor of the danger, could contrive no other method of doing it, than by uttering thoſe cries and making thoſe geſtures, which are the ſigns of fear; as two men at this day would endeavour to make themſelves underſtood by each other, if thrown together on a deſolate iſland, ignorant of each other's language. Thoſe exclamations therefore, by grammarians called interjections, uttered in a ſtrong and paſſionate manner, were undoubtedly the elements of ſpeech.

When more enlarged communication became requiſite, and names began to be applied to objects; how can we ſuppoſe men proceeded in this application of names, or invention of words? Certainly by imitating as much, as they could, the nature of the object named by the ſound of the name given to it. As a painter, who would repreſent graſs, muſt employ a green color; ſo in the infancy of language one, giving a name to any thing harſh or boiſterous, would of courſe employ a harſh or boiſterous ſound. He could not do otherwiſe, if he deſired to excite in the hearer the idea of that object, which he wiſhed to name. To imagine words invented, or names given to things, without any ground or reaſon, is to ſuppoſe an effect without a cauſe. There muſt always have been ſome motive, which led to one name, rather than another; and we can ſuppoſe no motive, which would more generally operate upon men in their firſt efforts toward language, than a deſire to paint by ſpeech the objects, which they named, in a manner more or leſs complete, according as it was in the power of the human voice to effect this imitation.

Wherever objects were to be named, in which ſound, noiſe, or motion was concerned, the imitation by words was ſufficiently obvious. Nothing was more natural, than to imitate by the ſound of the voice the quality of the ſound or noiſe, which any external object produced; and to form its name accordingly. Thus in all languages we diſcover a multitude of words, which are evi-

dently conſtructed on this principle. A certain bird is called the Cuckoo from the ſound, which it emits. When one ſort of wind is ſaid to *whiſtle*, and another to *roar*; when a ſerpent is ſaid to *hiſs*; a fly to *buzz*, and falling timber to *craſh*; when a ſtream is ſaid to *flow*, and hail to *rattle*; the reſemblance between the word and the thing ſignified is plainly diſcernible. But in the names of objects, which addreſs the ſight only, where neither noiſe, nor motion is concerned; and ſtill more in terms, appropriated to moral ideas, this analogy appears to fail. Yet many learned men have imagined that, though in ſuch caſes it becomes more obſcure, it is not altogether loſt; and that in the radical words of all languages there may be traced ſome degree of correſpondence with the objects ſignified.

This principle however of a natural relation between words and objects can be applied to language only in its moſt ſimple and early ſtate. Though in every tongue ſome remains of it may be traced, it were utterly in vain to ſearch for it through the whole conſtruction of any modern language. As terms increaſe in every nation, and the vaſt field of language is filled up, words by a thouſand fanciful and irregular methods of derivation and compoſition deviate widely from the primitive character of their roots, and loſe all reſemblance in ſound of the things ſignified. This is the preſent ſtate of language. Words, as we now uſe them, taken in general, may be conſidered, as ſymbols, not imitations; as arbi-

trary or inſtituted, not natural ſigns of ideas. But there can be no doubt, that language, the nearer we approach to its riſe among men, will be found to partake more of a natural expreſſion.

Interjections, it has been ſhown, or paſſionate exclamations, were the elements of ſpeech. Men labored to communicate their feelings to each other by thoſe expreſſive cries and geſtures, which nature taught them. After words, or names of objects, began to be invented, this mode of ſpeaking by natural ſigns could not be all at once diſuſed. For language in its infancy muſt have been extremely barren; and there certainly was a period among all rude nations, when converſation was carried on by a very few words, intermixed with many exclamations and earneſt geſtures. The ſmall ſtock of words which men then poſſeſſed, rendered thoſe helps entirely neceſſary for explaining their conceptions; and rude, uncultivated individuals, not having always ready even the few words, which they knew, would naturally labor to make themſelves underſtood by varying their tones of voice, and by accompanying their tones with the moſt expreſſive geſticulations.

To this mode of ſpeaking neceſſity gave riſe. But we muſt obſerve that, after this neceſſity had in a great degree ceaſed by language becoming in proceſs of time more extenſive and copious, the antient manner of ſpeech ſtill ſubſiſted among many nations; and, what had ariſen from neceſſity, continued to be uſed for or-

nament. In the Greek and Roman languages a muſical and geſticulating pronunciation was retained in a very high degree. Without attending to this we ſhall be at a loſs in underſtanding ſeveral paſſages of the Claſſics, which relate to the public ſpeaking and theatrical entertainments of the antients. Our modern pronunciation would have ſeemed to them a lifeleſs monotony. The declamation of their orators and the pronunciation of their actors upon the ſtage approached to the nature of recitative in muſic; was capable of being marked by notes, and ſupported by inſtruments; as ſeveral learned men have proved.

With regard to geſture the caſe was parallel; for ſtrong tones and animated geſtures always go together. The action both of orators and players in Greece and Rome was far more vehement, than that, to which we are accuſtomed. To us Roſcius would appear a madman. Geſture was of ſuch conſequence on the antient ſtage, that there is reaſon for believing that on ſome occaſions the ſpeaking and the acting were divided; which, according to our ideas, would form a ſtrange exhibition. One player ſpoke the words in the proper tones, while another expreſſed the correſponding motions and geſtures. Cicero tells us it was a conteſt between him and Roſcius, whether he could expreſs a ſentiment in a greater variety of phraſes, or Roſcius in a greater variety of intelligible ſignificant geſtures. At laſt geſture engroſſed the ſtage entirely; for under the reigns

of Auguſtus and Tiberius the favorite entertainment of the Public was the Pantomime, which was carried on by geſticulation only. The people were moved, and wept at it as much, as at tragedies; and the paſſion for it became ſo violent, that laws were made for reſtraining the ſenators from ſtudying the pantomime art. Now, though in declamations and theatrical exhibitions both tone and geſture were carried much farther, than in common diſcourſe; yet public ſpeaking of any kind muſt in every country bear ſome proportion to the manner, which is uſed in converſation; and ſuch public entertainments could never be reliſhed by a nation, whoſe tones and geſtures in diſcourſe were as languid, as ours.

The early language of men, being entirely compoſed of words deſcriptive of ſenſible objects, became of neceſſity extremely metaphorical. For, to ſignify any deſire or paſſion, or any act or feeling of the mind, they had no fixed expreſſion, which was appropriated to that purpoſe; but were obliged to paint the emotion or paſſion, which they felt, by alluding to thoſe ſenſible objects, which had moſt connection with it, and which could render it in ſome degree viſible to others.

But it was not neceſſity alone, that gave riſe to this pictured ſtyle. In the infancy of all ſocieties fear and ſurpriſe, wonder and aſtoniſhment, are the moſt frequent paſſions of men. Their language will neceſſarily be affected by this character of their minds. They will be diſpoſed to paint every thing in the ſtrongeſt colors.

Even the manner, in which the firſt tribes of men uttered their words, had conſiderable influence on their ſtyle. Wherever ſtrong exclamations, tones, and geſtures are connected with converſation, the imagination is always more exerciſed; a greater effort of fancy and paſſion is excited. Thus the fancy, being kept awake and rendered more ſprightly by this mode of utterance, operates upon ſtyle, and gives it additional life and ſpirit.

As one proof among many, which might be produced, of the truth of theſe obſervations, we ſhall tranſcribe a ſpeech from Colden's Hiſtory of the Five Indian Nations, which was delivered by their Chiefs, when entering on a treaty of peace with us, in the following language. "We are happy in having buried under ground "the red axe, that has ſo often been dyed in the "blood of our brethren. Now in this fort we inter the "axe, and plant the tree of peace. We plant a tree, "whoſe top will reach the ſun; and its branches "ſpread abroad ſo, that it ſhall be ſeen afar off. May "its growth never be ſtifled and choked; but may it "ſhade both your country and ours with its leaves! "Let us make faſt its roots, and extend them to the ut-"moſt of your colonies. If the French ſhould come, "to ſhake this tree, we ſhould know it by the motion "of its roots reaching into our country. May the "Great Spirit allow us to reſt in tranquillity upon our "mats, and never again dig up the axe, to cut down "the tree of peace! Let the earth be trodden hard over

"it, where it lies buried. Let a ſtrong ſtream run un-
"der the pit, to waſh the evil away out of our ſight and
"remembrance. The fire, that had long burned in
"Albany, is extinguiſhed. The bloody bed is waſhed
"clean, and the tears are wiped from our eyes. We
"now renew the covenant chain of friendſhip. Let it
"be kept bright and clean, as ſilver, and not ſuffered
"to contract any ruſt. Let not any one pull away his
"arm from it."

As language in its progreſs grew more copious, it gradually loſt that figurative ſtyle, which was its early character. The vehement manner of ſpeaking by tones and geſtures became leſs common. Inſtead of Poets Philoſophers became the inſtructors of men? and in their reaſoning on all ſubjects introduced that plainer and more ſimple ſtyle of compoſition, which we now call Proſe. Thus the antient metaphorical and poetical dreſs of Language was at length laid aſide in the intercourſe of men, and reſerved for thoſe occaſions only, on which ornament was profeſſedly ſtudied.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF LANGUAGE AND OF WRITING.

WHEN we examine the order, in which words are arranged in a ſentence, we find a very remarkable difference between antient and modern tongues. The conſideration of this will ſerve to unfold farther the genius

of Language, and to ſhew the cauſes of thoſe alterations it has undergone in the progreſs of ſociety.

To conceive diſtinctly the nature of this alteration, we muſt go back, as before, to the earlieſt period of Language. Let us figure to ourſelves a Savage beholding ſome fruit, which he earneſtly deſires, and requeſts another to give him. Suppoſe him unacquainted with words, he would ſtrive to make himſelf underſtood by pointing eagerly at the object deſired, and uttering at the ſame time a paſſionate cry. Suppoſing him to have acquired words, the firſt word, which he would utter, would be the name of that object. He would not expreſs himſelf according to our order of conſtruction, "Give me fruit;" but according to the Latin order, "Fruit give me," "Fructum da mihi," for this plain reaſon, that his attention was wholly directed toward fruit, the object deſired. Hence we might conclude *a priori*, that this was the order, in which words were moſt commonly arranged in the infancy of Language; and accordingly we find in reality that in this order words are arranged in moſt of the antient tongues, as in the Greek and Latin; and it is ſaid likewiſe in the Ruſſian, Sclavonic, Gaëlic, and ſeveral American tongues.

The modern languages of Europe have adopted a different arrangement from the antient. In their proſe compoſitions very little variety is admitted in the collocation of words; they are chiefly fixed to one order, which may be called the Order of the Underſtanding,

They place firſt in the ſentence the perſon or thing, which ſpeaks or acts; next its action; and laſtly the object of its action. Thus an Engliſh Writer, paying a compliment to a great man, would ſay, "It is impoſſi- "ble for me to paſs over in ſilence ſo diſtinguiſhed "mildneſs, ſo ſingular and unheard of clemency, and "ſo uncommon moderation, in the exerciſe of ſupreme "power." Here is firſt preſented to us the perſon, who ſpeaks, "It is impoſſible for me;" next, what the ſame perſon is to do, "*to paſs over in ſilence;*" and laſtly the object, which excites him to action, "the mildneſs, clem- "ency, and moderation of his patron." Cicero, from whom theſe words are tranſlated, reverſes this order. He begins with the object; places that firſt, which was the exciting idea in the ſpeaker's mind, and ends with the ſpeaker and his action. "Tantam manſuetudinem, "tam inuſitatam inauditamque clementiam, tantumque "in ſumma poteſtate rerum omnium modum, tacitus "nullo modo præterire poſſum." Here, it muſt be ob- ſerved, the Latin order is more animated; the Engliſh more clear and diſtinct.

Our language naturally allows greater liberty for tranſpoſition and inverſion in poetry, than in proſe. Even there however this liberty is confined within nar- row limits in compariſon with the antient languages. In this reſpect modern tongues vary from each other. The Italian approaches the neareſt in its character to the antient tranſpoſition; the Engliſh has more inver-

ſion, than the reſt; and the French has the leaſt of all.

Writing is an improvement upon Speech, and conſequently was poſterior to it in order of time. Its characters are of two kinds, ſigns of things and ſigns of words. Thus the pictures, hieroglyphics, and ſymbols, employed by the Antients, were of the former ſort; the alphabetical characters, now employed by Europeans, of the latter.

Pictures were certainly the firſt attempt toward writing. Mankind in all ages and in all nations have been prone to imitation. This would ſoon be employed for deſcribing and recording events. Thus to ſignify that one man had killed another, they painted the figure of one man lying on the ground, and of another ſtanding by him with a hoſtile weapon in his hand. When America was firſt diſcovered, this was the only kind of writing, with which the Mexicans were acquainted. It was however a very imperfect mode of recording facts; ſince by pictures external events only could be delineated.

Hieroglyphical characters may be conſidered, as the ſecond ſtage of the Art of Writing. They conſiſt of certain ſymbols, which are made to ſtand for inviſible objects on account of their ſuppoſed reſemblance of the objects themſelves. Thus an eye repreſented knowledge; and a circle, having neither beginning, nor end, was the ſymbol of eternity. Egypt was the country,

where this kind of writing was moſt ſtudied, and brought into a regular art. By theſe characters all the boaſted wiſdom of their Prieſts was conveyed. They pitched upon animals, to be the emblems of moral objects, according to the qualities, with which they ſuppoſed them to be endued. Thus imprudence was denominated by a fly; wiſdom by an ant; and victory by a hawk. But this ſort of writing was in the higheſt degree enigmatical and confuſed; and conſequently a very imperfect vehicle of knowledge.

From hieroglyphics ſome nations gradually advanced to ſimple arbitrary marks, which ſtood for objects, though without any reſemblance of the objects ſignified. Of this nature was the writing of the Peruvians. They uſed ſmall cords of different colors; and by knots upon theſe, of different ſizes and variouſly ranged, they invented ſigns for communicating their thoughts to one another. The Chineſe at this day uſe written characters of this nature. They have no alphabet of letters or ſimple ſounds, of which their words are compoſed; but every ſingle character, which they uſe, is expreſſive of an idea; it is a mark, which ſignifies ſome one thing or object. The number of theſe characters muſt conſequently be immenſe. They are ſaid indeed to amount to ſeventy thouſand. To be perfectly acquainted with them is the buſineſs of a whole life; which muſt have greatly retarded among them the progreſs of every kind of ſcience.

It is evident, that the Chineſe characters, like hieroglyphics, are ſigns of things, and not of words. For we are told, that the Japaneſe, the Tonquineſe, and the Coreans, who ſpeak different languages from each other, and from the inhabitants of China, uſe however the ſame written characters with them, and thus correſpond intelligibly with one another in writing, though mutually ignorant of each others' language. Our arithmetical figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, &c, are an example of this ſort of writing. They have no dependence on words; each figure repreſents the number, for which it ſtands; and conſequently is equally underſtood by all nations, who have agreed in the uſe of theſe figures.

The firſt ſtep, to remedy the imperfection, the ambiguity, and the tedioufneſs of each of the methods of communication, which have been mentioned, was the invention of ſigns, which ſhould ſtand not directly for things, but for the words, by which things were named and diſtinguiſhed. An alphabet of ſyllables ſeems to have been invented previouſly to an alphabet of letters. Such a one is ſaid to be retained at this day in Æthiopia and ſome countries of India. But at beſt it muſt have been imperfect and ineffectual; ſince the number of characters, being very conſiderable, muſt have rendered both reading and writing very complex and laborious.

To whom we are indebted for the ſublime and refined diſcovery of Letters is not determined. They were

brought into Greece by Cadmus the Phœnician, who, according to Sir Iſaac Newton's Chronology, was contemporary with King David. His alphabet contained only ſixteen letters. The reſt were afterward added, according as ſigns for proper ſounds were found to be wanting. The Phœnician, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman alphabets agree ſo much in the figure, names, and arrangement of the letters, as amounts to demonſtration, that they were derived originally from the ſame ſource.

The antient order of writing was from the right hand to the left. This method, as appears from ſome very old inſcriptions prevailed even among the Greeks. They afterward uſed to write their lines alternately from the right to the left, and from the left to the right. The inſcription on the famous Sigæan Monument is a ſpecimen of this mode of writing, which continued till the days of Solon, the celebrated Legiſlator of Athens. At length the motion from the left hand to the right being found more natural and convenient, this order of writing was adopted by all the nations of Europe.

Writing was firſt exhibited on pillars and tables of ſtone; afterward on plates of the ſofter metals. As it became more common, the leaves and bark of certain trees were uſed in ſome countries; and in others tablets of wood, covered with a thin coat of ſoft wax, on which the impreſſion was made with a ſtylus of iron. Parch-

ment, made of the hides of animals, was an invention of later times. Paper was not invented before the fourteenth century.

STRUCTURE OF LANGUAGE.

THE common diviſion of Speech into eight parts, nouns, pronouns, verbs, participles, adverbs, prepoſitions, interjections, and conjunctions, is not very accurate; ſince under the general term of nouns it comprehends both ſubſtantives and adjectives, which are parts of ſpeech eſſentially diſtinct. Yet, as we are moſt accuſtomed to this diviſion, and as logical exactneſs is not neceſſary to our preſent deſign; we ſhall adopt theſe terms, which habit has made familiar to us.

Subſtantive nouns are the foundation of Grammar, and the moſt antient part of ſpeech. When men had advanced beyond ſimple interjections or exclamations of paſſion, and had begun to communicate their ideas to each other; they would be obliged to aſſign names to objects, by which they were ſurrounded. Wherever a ſavage looked, he beheld foreſts and trees. To diſtinguiſh each by a ſeparate name would have been endleſs. Their common qualities; ſuch, as ſpringing from a root, and bearing branches and leaves, would ſuggeſt a general idea and a general name. The genus, *tree*, was afterward ſubdivided into its ſeveral ſpecies of oak, elm, aſh, &c. upon experience and obſervation.

Still however only general terms were uſed in ſpeech. For oak, elm, and aſh were names of whole claſſes of objects, each of which comprehended an immenſe number of undiſtinguiſhed individuals. Thus, when the nouns man, lion, or tree, were mentioned in converſation, it could not be known, which man, lion, or tree was meant among the multitude, comprehended under one name. Hence aroſe a very uſeful contrivance for determining the individual object intended by mean of that part of ſpeech, called the Article. In Engliſh we have two articles, *a* and *the*; *a* is more general, *the* more definite. The Greeks had but one, which agrees with our definite article *the*. They ſupplied the place of our article *a* by the abſence of their article; thus Ἀνθρωπος ſignifies *a* man; ὁ Ἀνθρωπος *the* man. The Latins had no article; but in the room of it uſed the pronouns hic, ille, iſte. This however ſeems a defect in their language; ſince articles certainly contribute much to perſpicuity and preciſion.

To preceive the truth of this remark, obſerve the different imports of the following expreſſions; "The ſon "of a king, the ſon of the king, a ſon of the king's." Each of theſe three phraſes has a ſeparate meaning, too obvious to be miſunderſtood. But in Latin "filius re-"gis" is entirely undetermined; it may bear either of the three ſenſes mentioned.

Beſide this quality of being defined by the article

three affections belong to nouns, number, gender and caſe, which deſerve to be conſidered.

NUMBER, as it makes a noun ſignificant of one or more, is ſingular or plural; a diſtinction found in all tongues; which muſt have been coeval with the origin of language; ſince there were few things, which men had more frequent neceſſity of expreſſing, than the diſtinction between one and more. In the Hebrew, Greek, and ſome other antient languages, we find not only a plural, but a dual number; the origin of which may very naturally be accounted for, as ſeparate terms of numbering were yet undiſcovered, and one, two, and many were all, or at leaſt the principal numeral diſtinctions, which men at firſt had any occaſion to make.

GENDER, which is founded on the diſtinction of the two ſexes, can with propriety be applied to the names of living creatures only. All other nouns ought to be of the neuter gender. Yet in moſt languages the ſame diſtinction is applied to a great number of inanimate objects. Thus in the Latin tongue *enſis*, a ſword, is maſculine; *ſagitta*, an arrow, is feminine; and this aſſignation of ſex to inanimate objects often appears entirely capricious. In the Greek and Latin however all inanimate objects are not diſtributed into maſculine and feminine; but many of them are claſſed, where all ought to be, under the neuter gender; as *ſaxum*, a rock; *mare*, the ſea. But in the Freneh and Italian tongues

the neuter gender is wholly unknown, all their names of inanimate objects being put upon the same footing with those of living creatures, and distributed without reserve into masculine and feminine. In the English language all nouns, literally used, that are not names of living creatures, are neuter; and ours is perhaps the only tongue (except the Chinese, which is said to resemble it in this particular) in which the distinction of gender is philosophically applied.

CASE denotes the state or relation, which one object bears to another, by some variation of the name of that object; generally in the final letters, and by some languages in the initial. All tongues however do not agree in this mode of expression. Declension is used by the Greek and Latin; but in the English, French, and Italian, it is not found; or at most it exists in a very imperfect state. These languages express the relations of objects by prepositions, which are the names of those relations prefixed to the names of objects. English nouns have no case, except a sort of genitive, commonly formed by adding the letter *s* to the noun; as when we say "Pope's Dunciad," meaning the Dunciad of Pope.

Whether the moderns have given beauty or utility to language by the abolition of cases may perhaps be doubted. They have however certainly rendered it more simple by removing that intricacy, which arose from different forms of declension, and from the irregu-

larities of the ſeveral declenſions. But in obtaining this ſimplicity, it muſt be confeſſed, we have filled language with a multitude of thoſe little words, called prepoſitions; which by perpetually occurring in every ſentence encumber ſpeech, and by rendering it more prolix enervate its force. The ſound of modern language is alſo leſs agreeable to the ear, being deprived of that variety and ſweetneſs, which aroſe from the length of words, and the change of terminations, occaſioned by caſes in the Greek and Latin. But perhaps the greateſt diſadvantage, we ſuſtain by the abolition of caſes, is the loſs of that liberty of tranſpoſition in the arrangement of words, which the antient languages enjoyed.

PRONOUNS are the repreſentatives of nouns, and are ſubject to the ſame modifications of number, gender, and caſe. We may obſerve however, that the pronouns of the firſt and ſecond perſon, *I* and *thou*, have no diſtinction of gender in any language; for, as they always refer to perſons preſent, their ſex muſt be known, and therefore needs not to be marked by their pronouns. But, as the third perſon may be abſent, or unknown, the diſtinction of gender there becomes requiſite; and accordingly in Engliſh it hath all the three genders, *he, ſhe, it*.

ADJECTIVES, as *ſtrong*, *weak*, *handſome*, *ugly*, are the plaineſt and moſt ſimple in that claſs of words, which

are termed attributive. They are common to all languages, and muſt have been very early invented; ſince objects could neither be diſtinguiſhed, nor treated of in diſcourſe, before names were aſſigned to their different qualities.

STRUCTURE OF LANGUAGE.

ENGLISH TONGUE.

OF all the parts of ſpeech VERBS are by far the moſt complex and uſeful. From their importance we may juſtly conclude, that they were coeval with the origin of language; though a long time muſt have been requiſite to rear them up to that accuracy, which they now poſſeſs.

The tenſes were contrived, to mark the ſeveral diſtinctions of time. We commonly think of no more, than its three great diviſions, the paſt, the preſent, and the future; and we might ſuppoſe that, if verbs had been ſo contrived, as merely to expreſs theſe, no more was neceſſary. But language proceeds with much greater ſubtilty. It divides time into its ſeveral moments; it regards it, as never ſtanding ſtill, but always flowing; things paſt, as more or leſs diſtant; and things future, as more or leſs remote by different gradations. Hence the variety of tenſes in almoſt every language.

The preſent may indeed be always regarded, as one indiviſible point, which admits no variety; "I am," "*ſum.*" But it is not ſo with the paſt. Even the pooreſt language has two or three tenſes, to expreſs its varieties. Ours has four. 1. A paſt action may be repreſented, as unfiniſhed, by the imperfect tenſe; "I was "walking, *ambulabam.*" 2. As finiſhed, by the perfect tenſe, "I have walked." 3. As finiſhed ſome time ſince, the particular time being left undetermined; "I walked, *ambulavi*;" This is what Grammarians call an aoriſt or indefinite paſt. 4. As finiſhed before ſomething elſe, which is alſo paſt. This is the pluſquamperfect; "I had walked, *ambulaveram.* I had "walked, before you called upon me." Our language, we muſt perceive with pleaſure, has an advantage over the Latin, which has only three variations of paſt time.

The varieties in future time are two; a ſimple or indefinite future, "I ſhall walk, *ambulabo*;" and a future having reference to ſomething elſe, which is likewiſe future, "I ſhall have walked, *ambulavero*; "I ſhall have walked, before he will pay me a viſit.

Beſide tenſes verbs admit the diſtinction of voices, viz. the active and paſſive; as "I love, or I am loved." They admit alſo the diſtinction of modes, which are intended to expreſs the perceptions and volitions of the mind under different forms. The indicative mode ſimply declares a propoſition; "I write; I have written."

The imperative requires, commands, or threatens; "Write thou; let him write." The ſubjunctive expreſſes a propoſition under the form of a condition, or as ſubordinate to ſomething, to which reference is made; "I might write; I could write; I ſhould write, if the matter were ſo." This expreſſion of the perceptions and volitions of the mind in ſo many various forms, together with the diſtinction of the three perſons *I*, *thou*, and *he*, conſtitutes the conjugation of verbs, which makes ſo great a part of the Grammar of all languages.

Conjugation is reckoned moſt perfect in thoſe languages, which by varying the termination, or the initial ſyllable of the verb, expreſſes the greateſt number of important circumſtances without the help of auxiliary verbs. In the Oriental tongues verbs have few tenſes; but their modes are ſo contrived, as to expreſs a great variety of circumſtances and relations. In the Hebrew they ſay in one word, without the aid of an auxiliary, not only, "I taught," but, "I was taught; I cauſed to teach; I was cauſed to teach; I taught myſelf." The Greek, which is commonly thought to be the moſt perfect of all languages, is very regular and complete in the modes and tenſes. The Latin, though formed on the ſame model, is not ſo perfect; particularly in the paſſive voice, which forms moſt of the tenſes by the aid of the auxiliary "*ſum*." In modern European tongues conjugation is very defective. The two great auxiliary verbs, to *have* and to *be*, with thoſe other aux-

iliaries, which we uſe in Engliſh, *do*, *ſhall*, *will*, *may*, and *can*, prefixed to a participle or to another verb in the infinitive mode, ſuperſede in a great meaſure the different terminations of modes and tenſes, which formed the antient conjugations.

The other parts of ſpeech, as they admit no variation, will require only a ſhort diſcuſſion.

Adverbs are for the moſt part an abridged mode of ſpeech, expreſſing by one word, what might by a circumlocution be reſolved into two or more words, belonging to other parts of ſpeech. "Here," for inſtance, is the ſame with "in this place." Hence adverbs ſeem to be leſs neceſſary, and of later introduction into ſpeech, than ſeveral other claſſes of words; and accordingly moſt of them are derived from other words, formerly eſtabliſhed in the language.

Prepoſitions and conjunctions ſerve to expreſs the relations, which things bear to one another, their mutual influence, dependence, and coherence; and ſo to join words together, as to form intelligible propoſitions. Conjunctions are commonly employed for connecting ſentences, or members of ſentences; as, *and*, *becauſe*, and the like. Prepoſitions are uſed for connecting words, as *of*, *from*, *to*, &c. The beauty and ſtrength of every language depend in a great meaſure on a proper uſe of conjunctions, prepoſitions, and thoſe relative pronouns,

which ſerve the ſame purpoſe of connecting different parts of diſcourſe.

Having thus briefly conſidered the Structure of Language in general, we will now enter more particularly into an examination of our own Language.

The Engliſh, which was ſpoken after the Norman Conqueſt, and continues to be ſpoken now, is a mixture of the antient Saxon and the Norman French together with ſuch new and foreign words, as commerce and learning have in a ſucceſſion of ages gradually introduced. From the influx of ſo many ſtreams, from a junction of ſo many diſſimilar parts, it naturally follows, that the Engliſh, like every compounded language, muſt be ſomewhat irregular. We cannot expect from it that complete analogy in ſtructure, which may be found in thoſe ſimpler languages, which were formed within themſelves, and built on one foundation. Hence our ſyntax is ſhort, ſince there are few marks in the words themſelves, which ſhow their relation to each other, or point out either their concordance or their government in a ſentence. But, if theſe be diſadvantages in a compound language, they are balanced by the advantages, which attend it; particularly by the number and variety of words, by which ſuch a language is commonly enriched. Few languages are more copious, than the Engliſh. In all grave ſubjects eſpecially, hiſtorical, critical, political, and moral, no complaint can juſtly be

made of the barrenneſs of our tongue. We are rich too in the language of poetry; our poetical ſtyle differs widely from proſe, not with reſpect to numbers only, but in the very words themſelves; which proves, what a compaſs and variety of words we can ſelect and employ, ſuited to different occaſions. Herein we are infinitely ſuperior to the French, whoſe poetical language, if it were not diſtinguiſhed by rhyme, would not be known to differ from their ordinary proſe. Their language however ſurpaſſes ours in expreſſing, whatever is delicate, gay, and amuſing. It is perhaps the happieſt language for converſation in the known world; but for the higher ſubjects of compoſition the Engliſh is juſtly conſidered, as far ſuperior to it.

The flexibility of a language, or its power of becoming either grave and ſtrong, or eaſy and flowing, or tender and gentle, or pompous and magnificent, as occaſions require, is a quality of great importance in ſpeaking and writing. This depends on the copiouſneſs of a language; the different arrangements, of which its words are ſuſceptible; and the variety and beauty of the ſounds of its words. The Greek poſſeſſed theſe requiſites in a higher degree, than any other language. It ſuperadded the graceful variety of its different dialects; and thereby readily aſſumed every kind of character, an author could wiſh, from the moſt ſimple and familiar to the moſt majeſtic. The Latin, though very beautiful, is inferior in this reſpect to the Greek. It

has more of a fixed character of ſtatelineſs and gravity; and is ſupported by a certain ſenatorial dignity, of which it is difficult for a writer to diveſt it. Among modern tongues the Italian poſſeſſes much more flexibility, than the French; and ſeems to be on the whole the moſt perfect of all the modern dialects, which have ariſen out of the ruins of the antient. Our language, though unequal to the Italian in flexibility, is not deſtitute of a conſiderable degree of this quality. Whoever conſiders the diverſity of ſtyle in ſome of our beſt writers, will diſcover in our tongue ſuch a circle of expreſſion, ſuch a power of accommodation to the various taſtes of men, as redounds much to its honor.

Our language has been thought to be very deficient in harmony of ſound; yet the melody of its verſification, its power of ſupporting poetical numbers without the aſſiſtance of rhyme, is a ſufficient proof, that it is far from being unharmonious. Even the hiſſing ſound, of which it has been accuſed, obtains leſs frequently, than has been ſuſpected. For in many words, and in the final ſyllables eſpecially, the letter *s* has the ſound of *z*, which is one of the ſounds, on which the ear reſts with pleaſure; as in *has*, *theſe*, *loves*, *hears*, &c.

It muſt however be admitted, that ſmoothneſs is not the diſtinguiſhing property of the Engliſh tongue. Strength and expreſſiveneſs rather, than grace and melody, conſtitute its character. It poſſeſſes alſo the

property of being the moſt ſimple of all the European dialects in its form and conſtruction. It is free from the intricacy of caſes, declenſions, modes, and tenſes. Its words are ſubject to fewer variations from their original form, than thoſe of any other language. Its nouns have no diſtinction of gender, except what is made by nature; and but one variation in caſe. Its adjectives admit no change, except what expreſſes the degree of compariſon. Its verbs inſtead of the varieties of antient conjugation admit only four or five changes in termination. A few prepoſitions and auxiliary verbs effect all the purpoſes of ſignificancy; while the principal words for the moſt part preſerve their form unaltered. Hence our language acquires a ſimplicity and facility, which are the cauſe of its being frequently written and ſpoken with inaccuracy. We imagine that a competent ſkill in it may be acquired without any ſtudy; and that in a ſyntax ſo narrow and limited, as ours, there is nothing, which requires attention. But the fundamental rules of ſyntax are common to the Engliſh and to the antient tongues; and regard to them is abſolutely requiſite for writing or ſpeaking with propriety.

Whatever be the advantages or defects of our language, it certainly deſerves in the higheſt degree our ſtudy and attention. The Greeks and Romans in the meridian of their glory beſtowed the higheſt cultivation on their reſpective languages. The French and Ital-

ſans have employed much ſtudy upon theirs; and their example is worthy of imitation. For, whatever knowledge may be gained by the ſtudy of other languages, it can never be communicated with advantage, unleſs by thoſe, who can write and ſpeak their own language with propriety. Let the matter of an author be ever ſo good and uſeful, his compoſitions will always ſuffer in the public eſteem, if his expreſſion be deficient in purity or propriety. At the ſame time the attainment of a correct and elegant ſtyle is an object, which demands application and labor. If any one ſuppoſe he can catch it merely by the ear, or acquire it by a haſty peruſal of ſome of our good authors, he will be much diſappointed. The many grammatical errors, the many impure expreſſions, which are found in authors, who are far from being contemptible, demonſtrate that a careful ſtudy of our language is previouſly requiſite for writing it with propriety, purity, and elegance.

STYLE, PERSPICUITY, AND PRECISION.

STYLE is the peculiar manner, in which a man expreſſes his thoughts by words. It is a picture of the ideas in his mind, and of the order, in which they there exiſt.

The qualities of a good ſtyle may be ranged under two heads, perſpicuity and ornament. It will readily

be admitted, that perſpicuity is the fundamental quality of a good ſtyle. Without this the brighteſt ornaments only glimmer through the dark; and perplex inſtead of pleaſing the reader. If we be forced to follow a writer with much care; to pauſe, and to read over his ſentences a ſecond time, in order to underſtand them fully; he will not pleaſe us long. Men are too indolent to reliſh ſo much labor. Though they may pretend to admire an author's depth, after they have diſcovered his meaning; they will ſeldom be inclined to look a ſecond time into his book.

Perſpicuity requires attention firſt to ſingle words and phraſes, and then to the conſtruction of ſentences. When conſidered with reſpect to words and phraſes, it requires theſe three qualities, *purity*, *propriety*, and *preciſion*.

Purity and propriety of language are often uſed indiſcriminately for each other; and indeed they are very nearly allied. A diſtinction however obtains between them. Purity is the uſe of ſuch words and conſtructions, as belong to the idiom of a particular language, in oppoſition to words and phraſes, which are imported from other languages, or which are obſolete, or newly coined, or employed without proper authority. Propriety is the choice of ſuch words, as the beſt and moſt eſtabliſhed uſage has appropriated to thoſe ideas, which we intend to expreſs by them. It implies a correct and happy application of them in oppoſition to vulgar or

low expreſſions, and to words and phraſes, leſs ſignificant of the ideas, we intend to convey. Style may be pure, that is it may be ſtrictly Engliſh without Scotticiſms or Galliciſms, or ungrammatical expreſſions of any kind, and yet be deficient in propriety. The words may be illy ſelected; not adapted to the ſubject, nor fully expreſſive of the author's meaning. He took them indeed from the general maſs of Engliſh words; but his choice was made without ſkill. But ſtyle cannot be proper without being pure; it is the union of purity and propriety, which renders it graceful and perſpicuous.

The exact meaning of preciſion may be learnt from the etymology of the word. It is derived from "*præ-*"*cidere*," to cut off; and ſignifies retrenching all ſuperfluities, and pruning the expreſſion in ſuch manner, as to exhibit neither more, nor leſs, than the ideas, intended to be conveyed.

Words, employed to expreſs ideas, may be faulty in three reſpects. They may either not expreſs the ideas, which the author means, but ſome others, which are only related; or they may expreſs thoſe ideas, but not completely; or they may expreſs them together with ſomething more, than he intends. Preciſion is oppoſed to theſe three faults; but particularly to the laſt, into which feeble writers are very apt to fall. They employ a multitude of words, to make themſeves underſtood, as they think, more diſtinctly; but they only confound the

reader. The image, as they place it before you, is always ſeen double. When an author tells us of his hero's *courage* in the day of battle; the expreſſion is preciſe, and we underſtand it fully. But, if from a deſire of multiplying words he praiſe his *courage* and *fortitude*; at the moment, he joins theſe words together, our idea begins to waver. He intends to expreſs one quality more ſtrongly; but he is in fact expreſſing two. *Courage* reſiſts danger; *fortitude* ſupports pain. The occaſions of exerting theſe qualities are different; and, being led to think of both together, when only one of them ſhould engage attention, our view is rendered unſteady, and our conception of the object indiſtinct.

The great ſource of a looſe ſtyle, the oppoſite of preciſion, is the injudicious uſe of words, called ſynonymous. Scarcely in any language are there two words, that convey preciſely the ſame idea; and a perſon, perfectly acquainted with the propriety of the language, will always be able to obſerve ſomething, by which they are diſtinguiſhed, In our language many inſtances may be given of difference in meaning among words, reputed ſynonymous; and, as the ſubject is important, we ſhall point out a few of them.

Surpriſed, aſtoniſhed, amazed, confounded. We are ſurpriſed at what is new or unexpected; we are aſtoniſhed at what is vaſt or great; we are amazed at what is incomprehenſible; we are confounded by what is ſhocking or terrible.

Pride, vanity. Pride makes us eſteem ourſelves; vanity makes us deſire the eſteem of others.

Haughtineſs, diſdain. Haughtineſs is founded on a high opinion of ourſelves; diſdain on a low opinion of others.

To weary, to fatigue. Continuance of the ſame thing wearies us; labor fatigues us. A man is wearied by ſtanding; he is fatigued by walking.

To abhor, to deteſt. To abhor imports ſimply ſtrong diſlike; to deteſt imports likewiſe ſtrong diſapprobation. We abhor being in debt; we deteſt treachery.

To invent, to diſcover. We invent things, which are new; we diſcover what was hidden. Galilæo invented the teleſcope; Harvey diſcovered the circulation of the blood.

Entire, complete. A thing is entire, when it wants none of its parts; complete, when it wants none of the appendages, which belong to it. A man may occupy an entire houſe; though he have not one complete apartment.

Enough, ſufficient. Enough relates to the quantity, which we wiſh to have of a thing. Sufficient relates to the uſe, that is to be made of it. Hence enough commonly ſignifies a greater quantity, than ſufficient does. The covetous man never has enough; though he has, what is ſufficient for nature.

Theſe are a few among many inſtances of words in our language, which by careleſs writers are apt to be miſtaken for ſynonymous. The more the diſtinction in the meaning of ſuch words is regarded, the more accurately and forcibly ſhall we ſpeak and write.

STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES.

A Proper conſtruction of ſentences is of ſuch importance in every ſpecies of compoſition, that we cannot be too ſtrict or minute in our attention to it. For, whatever be the ſubject, if the ſentences be conſtructed in a clumſy, perplexed, or feeble manner; the work cannot be read with pleaſure, nor even with profit. But by attention to the rules, which relate to this part of ſtyle, we acquire the habit of expreſſing ourſelves with perſpicuity and elegance; and, if a diſorder happen to ariſe in ſome of our ſentences, we immediately ſee where it lies, and are able to rectify it.

The properties moſt eſſential to a perfect ſentence are the four following. 1. Clearneſs. 2. Unity, 3. Strength. 4. Harmony.

Ambiguity is oppoſed to clearneſs, and ariſes from two cauſes; either from a wrong choice of words, or a wrong collocation of them. Of the choice of words as far, as regards perſpicuity, we have already ſpoken. Of

the collocation of them we are now to treat. From the nature of our language a capital rule in the arrangement of our ſentences is, that words or members, moſt nearly related, ſhould be placed as near to each other, as poſſible, that their mutual relation may clearly appear. This rule is frequently neglected even by good writers. A few inſtances will ſhow both its importance and application.

In the poſition of adverbs, which are uſed to qualify the ſignification of ſomething, which either precedes or follows them, a good deal of nicety is to be obſerved. "By greatneſs," ſays Addiſon, "I do not only mean "the bulk of any ſingle object, but the largeneſs of a "whole view." Here the place of the adverb *only* makes it limit the verb *mean*. "I do not only mean." The queſtion may then be aſked, What does he more than mean? Had it been placed after *bulk*, ſtill it would have been wrong, for it might then be aſked, What is meant beſide the *bulk*? Is it the color, or any other property? Its proper place is after the word *object*: "By "greatneſs I do not mean the bulk of any ſingle object "only;" for then, when it is aſked, What does he mean more, than the bulk of a ſingle object; the anſwer comes out preciſely, as the author intends, "the large-"neſs of a whole view," "Theiſm," ſays Lord Shaftsbury, "can only be oppoſed to polytheiſm or athe-"iſm." It may be aſked then, is theiſm capable of no-

thing elſe, except being *oppoſed* to polytheiſm or atheiſm? This is what the words literally mean through the improper collocation of *only*. He ought to have ſaid, "Theiſm can be oppoſed only to polytheiſm or "atheiſm." Inaccuracies of this kind occaſion little ambiguity in common diſcourſe, becauſe the tone and emphaſis, uſed by the ſpeaker, generally make the meaning perſpicuous. But in writing, where a perſon ſpeaks to the eye, he ought to be more accurate; and ſo to connect adverbs with the words, they qualify, that his meaning cannot be miſtaken on the firſt inſpection.

When a circumſtance is interpoſed in the middle of a ſentence, it ſometimes requires attention, to place it in ſuch manner, as to diveſt it of all ambiguity. For inſtance, "Are theſe deſigns," ſays Lord Bolingbroke, "which any man, who is born a Briton, in any circum-"ſtances, in any ſituation, ought to be aſhamed or a-"fraid to avow?" Here we are in doubt, whether the phraſes, "*in any circumſtances, in any ſituation,*" be connected with "a man born in Britain;" or with that man's "avowing his deſigns." If the latter, as ſeems moſt likely, was intended to be the meaning; the arrangement ought to be this, "Are theſe deſigns, which "any man, who is born a Briton, ought to be aſhamed "or afraid in any circumſtances, in any ſituation, to "avow?"

Still more attention is requiſite to a proper diſpoſition of the relative pronouns, *who*, *which*, *what*, *whoſe*; and of all thoſe particles, which expreſs the connection of the parts of ſpeech. As all reaſoning depends upon this connection, we cannot be too accurate with regard to it. A ſmall error may obſcure the meaning of a whole ſentence; and even where the meaning is apparent, yet if theſe relatives be miſplaced; we always find ſomething awkward and diſjointed in the ſtructure of the period. The following paſſage in Biſhop Sherlock's Sermons will exemplify theſe obſervations; "It is folly to pretend to arm ourſelves againſt the accidents of life, by heaping up treaſures, which nothing "can protect us againſt, but the good providence of our "Heavenly Father." *Which* grammatically refers to the immediately preceding noun, which here is "treaſures;" and this would convert the whole period into nonſenſe. The ſentence ſhould have been thus conſtructed; "It is "folly to pretend by heaping up treaſures to arm our-"ſelves againſt the accidents of life, againſt which "nothing can protect us, but the good providence of our "Heavenly Father."

We now proceed to the ſecond quality of a well arranged ſentence, which we termed its Unity. This is a capital property. The very nature of a ſentence implies one propoſition to be expreſſed. It may conſiſt of parts; but theſe parts muſt be ſo cloſely bound togeth-

er, as to make an impreſſion of one object only upon the mind.

To preſerve this unity, we muſt firſt obſerve, that during the courſe of the ſentence the ſubject ſhould be changed as little, as poſſible. There is generally in every ſentence ſome perſon or thing, which is the governing word. This ſhould be continued ſo, if poſſible, from the beginning to the end of it. Should a man expreſs himſelf in this manner; "After we came to anchor, "they put me on ſhore, where I was ſaluted by all my "friends, who received me with the greateſt kindneſs." Though the objects in this ſentence are ſufficiently connected; yet by ſhifting ſo often the ſubject and perſon, *we*, *they*, *I*, and *who*, they appear in ſo diſunited a view, that the ſenſe and connection are nearly loſt. The ſentence is reſtored to its proper unity by conſtructing it thus; "Having come to anchor, I was put on ſhore, "where I was ſaluted by all my friends, who received "me with the greateſt kindneſs."

The ſecond rule is, never crowd into one ſentence ideas, which have ſo little connection, that they might well be divided into two or more ſentences. Violation of this rule never fails to diſpleaſe a reader. Its effect indeed is ſo diſguſting, that of the two it is the ſafeſt extreme, to err rather by too many ſhort ſentences, than by one, that is overloaded and confuſed. The following ſentence from a tranſlation of Plutarch will juſtify

this opinion; "Their march," ſays the author, ſpeaking of the Greeks, "was through an uncultivated country, whoſe ſavage inhabitants fared hardly, having no "other riches, than a breed of lean ſheep, whoſe fleſh "was rank and unſavory by reaſon of their continual "feeding upon ſea-fiſh." Here the ſubject is repeatedly changed. The march of the Greeks, the deſcription of the inhabitants, through whoſe country they paſſed, the account of their ſheep, and the reaſon of their ſheep being diſagreeable food, make a jumble of objects, ſlightly related to each other, which the reader cannot without conſiderable difficulty comprehend in one view.

The third rule for preſerving the unity of a ſentence is, keep clear of parentheſes in the middle of it. Theſe may on ſome occaſions have a ſpirited appearance, as prompted by a certain vivacity of thought, which can glance happily aſide, as it is going along. But in general their effect is extremely bad; being a perplexed method of diſpoſing of ſome thought, which a writer has not art enough to introduce in its proper place. It is needleſs to produce any inſtances, as they occur ſo frequently among incorrect writers.

The fourth rule for the unity of a ſentence is, bring it to a full and perfect cloſe. It needs not to be obſerved, that an unfiniſhed ſentence is no ſentence with reſpect to grammar. But ſentences often occur, which are more, than finiſhed. When we have arrived at

what we expected to be the concluſion; when we are come to the word, on which the mind is naturally led to reſt; unexpectedly ſome circumſtance is added, which ought to have been omitted, or diſpoſed of elſewhere. Thus, for inſtance, in the following ſentence from Sir William Temple the adjection to the ſentence is entirely foreign to it. Speaking of Burnet's Theory of the Earth, and Fontenelle's Plurality of Worlds; "The "firſt," ſays he, "could not end his learned treatiſe "without a panegyric of modern learning in compari-"ſon of the antient; and the other falls ſo groſsly into "the cenſure of the old poetry and preference of the "new, that I could not read either of theſe ſtrains with-"out ſome indignation; which no quality among men "is ſo apt to raiſe in me, as ſelf ſufficiency." The word "indignation" concludes the ſentence; for the laſt member is added after the proper cloſe.

STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES.

WE now proceed to the third quality of a correct ſentence, which we termed Strength. By this is meant ſuch a diſpoſition of the ſeveral words and members, as will exhibit the ſenſe to the beſt advantage; as will render the impreſſion, which the period is intended to make, moſt full and complete; and give every word and every member its due weight and force. To the produc-

tion of this effect perſpicuity and unity are abſolutely neceſſary ; but more is requiſite. For a ſentence may be clear ; it may alſo be compact, or have the requiſite unity ; and yet by ſome unfavorable circumſtance in the ſtructure it may fail in that ſtrength or livelineſs of impreſſion, which a more happy collocation would produce.

The firſt rule for promoting the ſtrength of a ſentence is, take from it all redundant words. Whatever can be eaſily ſupplied in the mind, is better omitted in the expreſſion Thus, " Content with deſerving a tri- " umph, he refuſed the honor of it," is better than " Being content with deſerving a triumph, he refuſed " the honor of it." It is one of the moſt uſeful exerciſes on reviewing, what we have written, to contract that circuitous mode of expreſſion, and to cut off thoſe uſeleſs excreſcences, which are uſually found in a firſt draught. But we muſt be cautious of pruning ſo cloſely, as to give a hardneſs and dryneſs to the ſtyle. Some leaves muſt be left to ſhelter and adorn the fruit.

As ſentences ſhould be cleared of ſuperfluous words, ſo alſo of ſuperfluous members. Oppoſed to this is the fault, we frequently meet, the laſt member of a period being only a repetition of the former in a different dreſs. For example, ſpeaking of beauty, " The very firſt diſ- " covery of it," ſays Addiſon, " ſtrikes the mind with " inward joy, and ſpreads delight through all its facul-

"ties." In this inſtance ſcarcely any thing is added by the ſecond member of the ſentence to what was expreſſed in the firſt. Though the flowing ſtyle of Addiſon may palliate ſuch negligence; yet it is generally true, that language, diveſted of this prolixity, is more ſtrong and beautiful.

The ſecond rule for promoting the ſtrength of a ſentence is, pay particular attention to the uſe of copulatives, relatives, and particles, employed for tranſition and connection. Some obſervations on this ſubject, which appear uſeful, ſhall be mentioned.

What is termed ſplitting of particles, or ſeparating a prepoſition from the noun, which it governs, is ever to be avoided. For example, "Though virtue borrows "no aſſiſtance from, yet it may often be accompanied "by, the advantages of fortune." In ſuch inſtances we ſuffer pain from the violent ſeparation of two things, which by nature are cloſely united.

The ſtrength of a ſentence is much injured by an unneceſſary multiplication of relative and demonſtrative particles. If a writer ſay, "there is nothing, which "diſguſts me ſooner, than the empty pomp of lan-"guage;" he expreſſes himſelf leſs forcibly, than if he had ſaid, "Nothing diſguſts me ſooner, than the emp-"ty pomp of language." The former mode of expreſſion in the introduction of a ſubject, or in laying down

a propoſition, to which particular attention is demanded, is very proper; but in ordinary diſcourſe the latter is far preferable.

With regard to the relative we ſhall only obſerve, that in converſation and epiſtolary writing it may be omitted; but in compoſitions of a ſerious or dignified kind it ſhould conſtantly be inſerted.

On the copulative particle *and*, which occurs ſo often, ſeveral obſervations are to be made. It is evident, that an unneceſſary repetition of it enfeebles ſtyle. By omitting it we often make a cloſer connection, a quicker ſucceſſion of objects, than when it is inſerted between them. "*Veni, vidi, vici,*" expreſſes with more ſpirit the rapidity of conqueſt, than if connecting particles had been uſed. When, however, we wiſh to prevent a quick tranſition from one object to another; and when enumerating objects, which we wiſh to appear as diſtinct from each other, as poſſible; copulatives may be multiplied with peculiar advantage. Thus Lord Bolingbroke ſays with propriety, "Such a man might fall a victim "to power; but truth, and reaſon, and liberty, would "fall with him."

The third rule for promoting the ſtrength of a ſentence is, diſpoſe of the principal word or words in that part of the ſentence, where they will make the moſt ſtriking impreſſion. Perſpicuity ought firſt to be ſtudied; and

the nature of our language allows no great liberty of collocation. In general the important words are placed at the beginning of a ſentence. Thus Mr. Addiſon; "The pleaſures of the imagination, taken in their full "extent, are not ſo groſs, as thoſe of ſenſe; nor ſo re- "fined, as thoſe of the underſtanding." This order ſeems to be the moſt plain and natural. Sometimes however, when we propoſe giving weight to a ſentence, it is uſeful to ſuſpend the meaning a little, and then to bring it out fully at the cloſe. "Thus," ſays Pope; "on whatever ſide we contemplate Homer, what prin- "cipally ſtrikes us, is his wonderful invention."

The fourth rule for promoting the ſtrength of ſentences is, make the members of them go on riſing in their importance one above another. This kind of arrangement is called a climax, and is ever regarded, as a beauty in compoſition. Why it pleaſes is ſufficiently evident. In all things we love to advance to what is more and more beautiful rather, than to follow a retrograde order. Having viewed ſome conſiderable object, we cannot without pain deſcend to an inferior circumſtance. "*Cavendum eſt*," ſays Quintilian, "*ne decreſcat* "*oratio, et fortior ſubjungatur aliquid infirmius.*" A weaker aſſertion ſhould never follow a ſtronger one; and, when a ſentence conſiſts of two members, the longeſt ſhould in general be the concluding one. Periods, thus divided, are pronounced, more eaſily; and, the ſhorteſt

member being placed firſt, we carry it more readily in our memory, as we proceed to the ſecond, and ſee the connection of the two more clearly. Thus to ſay, "When our paſſions have forſaken us, we flatter our-"ſelves with the belief that we have forſaken them," is both more graceful and more perſpicuous, than to begin with the longeſt part of the propoſition; "We flat-"ter ourſelves with the belief that we have forſaken our "paſſions, when they have forſaken us."

The fifth rule for conſtructing ſentences with ſtrength is, avoid concluding them with an adverb, a prepoſition, or any inſignificant word. By ſuch concluſions ſtyle is always weakened and degraded. Sometimes indeed, where the ſtreſs and ſignificancy reſt chiefly upon words of this kind, they ought to have the principal place allotted them. No fault, for example, can be found with this ſentence of Bolingbroke; "In their proſperity my "friends ſhall never hear of me; in their adverſity al-"ways;" where *never* and *always*, being emphatical words, are ſo placed, as to make a ſtrong impreſſion. But when theſe inferior parts of ſpeech are introduced, as circumſtances, or as qualifications of more important words; they ſhould always be diſpoſed of in the leaſt conſpicuous parts of the period.

We ſhould always avoid concluding a ſentence or member with any of thoſe particles, which diſtinguiſh the caſes of nouns; as *of, to, from, with, by*. Thus it is

much better to ſay, "Avarice is a crime, of which wiſe "men are often guilty," than to ſay, "Avarice is a "crime, which wiſe men are often guilty of." This is a phraſeology, which all correct writers ſhun.

A complex verb, compounded of a ſimple verb and a ſubſequent prepoſition, is alſo an ungraceful concluſion of a period; as *bring about*, *clear up*, *give over*, and many others of the ſame kind; inſtead of which, if a ſimple verb be employed, it will terminate the ſentence with more ſtrength. Even the pronoun *it*, eſpecially when joined with ſome of the prepoſitions, as *with it*, *in it*, *to it*, cannot without violation of grace be the concluſion of a ſentence. Any phraſe, which expreſſes a circumſtance only, cannot conclude a ſentence without great inelegance. Circumſtances indeed are like unſhapely ſtones in a building, which try the ſkill of an artiſt, where to place them with the leaſt offence. We ſhould not crowd too many of them together; but rather interſperſe them in different parts of the ſentence, joined with the principal words, on which they depend. Thus, for inſtance, when Dean Swift ſays, "What I had the hon- "or of mentioning to your Lordſhip ſometime ago in "converſation, was not a new thought;" theſe two circumſtances, *ſometime ago* and *in converſation*, which are joined, would have been better ſeparated thus; "What I had the honor ſome time ago of mentioning "to your Lordſhip in converſation."

The ſixth and laſt rule concerning the ſtrength of a ſentence is this, in the members of it, where two things are compared or contraſted; where either reſemblance or oppoſition is to be expreſſed; ſome reſemblance in the language and conſtruction ought to be obſerved. The following paſſage from Pope's preface to his Homer beautifully exemplifies this rule. "Homer was "the greater genius; Virgil the better artiſt; in the "one we admire the man; in the other the work. "Homer hurries us with a commanding impetuoſity; "Virgil leads us with an attractive majeſty. Homer "ſcatters with a generous profuſion; Virgil beſtows "with a careful magnificence. Homer, like the Nile, "pours out his riches with a ſudden overflow; Virgil, "like a river in its banks, with a conſtant ſtream. "When we look upon their machines, Homer ſeems "like his own Jupiter in his terrors, ſhaking Olympus, "ſcattering lightnings, and firing the heavens. Vir-"gil like the ſame power in his benevolence, counſel-"ling with the Gods, laying plans for empires, and or-"dering his whole creation." Periods, thus conſtruct-ed, when introduced with propriety, and not too frequently repeated, have a ſenſible beauty. But, if ſuch a conſtruction be aimed at in every ſentence; it betrays into a diſagreeable uniformity, and produces a regular jingle in the period, which tires the ear, and plainly diſcovers affectation.

STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES.

HARMONY.

HAVING conſidered ſentences with regard to their meaning under the heads of Perſpicuity, Unity, and Strength; we ſhall now conſider them with reſpect to their ſound.

In the harmony of periods two things are to be conſidered. Firſt agreeable ſound or modulation in general without any particular expreſſion. Next the ſound ſo ordered, as to become expreſſive of the ſenſe. The firſt is the more common; the ſecond the ſuperior beauty.

The beauty of muſical conſtruction depends upon the choice and arrangement of words. Thoſe words are moſt pleaſing to the ear, which are compoſed of ſmooth and liquid ſounds, in which there is a proper intermixture of vowels and conſonants without too many harſh conſonants, or too many open vowels in ſucceſſion. Long words are generally more pleaſing to the ear, than monoſyllables; and thoſe are the moſt muſical, which are not wholly compoſed of long or ſhort ſyllables, but of an intermixture of them; ſuch, as *delight, amuſe, velocity, celerity, beautiful, impetuoſity*. If the words, however, which compoſe a ſentence, be ever ſo well choſen and harmonious; yet, if they be unſkilfully ar-

ranged, its muſic is entirely loſt. As an inſtance of a muſical ſentence, we may take the following from Milton; "We ſhall conduct you to a hill ſide, laborious "indeed at the firſt aſcent; but elſe ſo ſmooth, ſo "green, ſo full of goodly proſpects and melodious "ſounds on every ſide, that the harp of Orpheus was "not more charming." Every thing in this ſentence conſpires to render it harmonious. The words are well choſen; *laborious, ſmooth, green, goodly, melodious, charming;* and ſo happily arranged, that no alteration can be made without injuring the melody.

There are two things, on which the muſic of a ſentence principally depends; theſe are the proper diſtribution of the ſeveral members of it, and the cloſe or cadence of the whole.

Firſt, the diſtribution of the ſeveral members ſhould be carefully regarded. Whatever is eaſy to the organs of ſpeech, is always grateful to the ear. While a period advances, the termination of each member forms a pauſe in the pronunciation; and theſe pauſes ſhould be ſo diſtributed, as to bear a certain muſical proportion to each other. This will be beſt illuſtrated by examples. "This diſcourſe concerning the "eaſineſs of God's commands does all along ſuppoſe "and acknowledge the difficulties of the firſt entrance "upon a religious courſe; except only in thoſe perſons "who have had the happineſs to be trained up to re-

" ligion by the eaſy and inſenſible degrees of a pious " and virtuous education." This ſentence is far from being harmonious; owing chiefly to this, that there is but one pauſe in it, by which it is divided into two members; each of which is ſo long, as to require a conſiderable ſtretch of breath in pronouncing it. On the contrary let us obſerve the grace of the following paſſage from Sir William Temple, in which he ſpeaks ſarcaſtically of man. " But, God be thanked, his " pride is greater, than his ignorance; and, what " he wants in knowledge, he ſupplies by ſufficien- " cy. When he has looked about him as far, as " he can, he concludes there is no more to be ſeen; " when he is at the end of his line, he is at the bottom " of the ocean; when he has ſhot his beſt, he is ſure " none ever did, or ever can ſhoot better, or beyond it. " His own reaſon he holds to be the certain meaſure of " truth; and his own knowledge of what is poſſible in " nature." Here every thing is at once eaſy to the breath, and grateful to the ear. We muſt however obſerve that, if compoſition abound with ſentences, which have too many reſts, and theſe placed at intervals apparently meaſured and regular, it is apt to ſavor of affectation.

The next thing, which demands attention, is the cloſe or cadence of the period. The only important rule, which can here be given, is this, when we aim at dignity or elevation, the ſound ſhould increaſe to the laſt;

the longeſt members of the period, and the fulleſt and moſt ſonorous words ſhould be reſerved for the concluſion. As an inſtance of this, the following ſentence of Addiſon may be given. "It fills the mind with the "largeſt variety of ideas; converſes with its objects at "the greateſt diſtance; and continues the longeſt in "action without being tired or ſatiated with its prop-"er enjoyments." Here every reader muſt be ſenſible of beauty in the juſt diſtribution of the pauſes, and in the manner of rounding the period, and of bringing it to a full and harmonious cloſe.

It may be remarked, that little words in the concluſion of a ſentence are as injurious to melody, as they are inconſiſtent with ſtrength of expreſſion. A muſical cloſe in our language ſeems in general to require either the laſt ſyllable, or the laſt but one, to be a long ſyllable. Words, which conſiſt chiefly of ſhort ſyllables, as *contrary*, *particular*, *retroſpect*, ſeldom terminate a ſentence harmoniouſly, unleſs a previous run of long ſyllables have rendered them pleaſing to the ear.

Sentences however, which are ſo conſtructed, as to make the ſound always ſwell toward the end, and reſt either on the laſt or penult ſyllable, give a diſcourſe the tone of declamation. If melody be not varied, the ear is ſoon cloyed with it. Sentences conſtructed in the ſame manner, with the pauſes at equal intervals, ſhould never ſucceed each other. Short ſentences muſt be

blended with long and ſwelling ones, to render diſcourſe ſprightly as well, as magnificent.

We now proceed to treat of a higher ſpecies of harmony; the ſound adapted to the ſenſe. Of this we may remark two degrees. Firſt the current of ſound ſuited to the tenor of a diſcourſe. Next a peculiar reſemblance effected between ſome object and the ſounds, that are employed in deſcribing it.

Sounds have in many reſpects an intimate correſpondence with our ideas; partly natural, partly produced by artificial aſſociations. Hence any one modulation of ſound, continued, ſtamps on ſtyle a certain character and expreſſion. Sentences, conſtructed with Ciceronian fulneſs, excite an idea of what is important, magnificent, and ſedate. But they ſuit no violent paſſion, no eager reaſoning, no familiar addreſs. Theſe require meaſures briſker, eaſier, and often more abrupt. It were as abſurd to write a panegyric and an invective in a ſtyle of the ſame cadence, as to ſet the words of a tender love ſong to the tune of a warlike march.

Beſide the general correſpondence of the current of ſound with the current of thought a more particular expreſſion of certain objects by reſembling ſounds may be attempted. In poetry this reſemblance is chiefly to be ſought. It obtains ſometimes indeed in proſe compoſition; but there in an inferior degree.

The ſounds of words may be employed for repreſenting chiefly three claſſes of objects; firſt other ſounds; ſecondly motions; and thirdly the emotions and paſſions of the mind.

In moſt languages the names of many particular ſounds are ſo formed, as to bear ſome reſemblance of the ſound, which they ſignify; as with us the *whiſtling* of winds, the *buzz* and *hum* of inſects, the *hiſs* of ſerpents, and the *craſh* of falling timber; and many other inſtances, where the name is plainly adapted to the ſound, it repreſents. A remarkable example of this beauty may be taken from two paſſages in Milton's Paradiſe Loſt; in one of which he deſcribes the ſound, made by the opening of the gates of hell; in the other, that made by the opening of the gates of heaven. The contraſt between the two exhibits to great advantage the art of the poet. The firſt is the opening of hell's gates;

——————On a ſudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring ſound
The infernal doors; and on their hinges grate
Harſh thunder.——————

Obſerve the ſmoothneſs of the other;

——————Heaven opened wide
Her ever during gates, harmonious ſound!
On golden hinges turning.——————

In the ſecond place the ſound of words is frequently employed to imitate motion; as it is ſwift

or ſlow, violent or gentle, uniform or interrupted, eaſy or accompanied with effort. Between ſound and motion there is no natural affinity; yet in the imagination there is a ſtrong one; as is evident from the connection between muſic and dancing. The poet can therefore give us a lively idea of the kind of motion, he would deſcribe, by the help of ſounds, which in our imagination correſpond with that motion. Long ſyllables naturally excite an idea of ſlow motion; as in this line of Virgil,

Olli inter ſeſe magna vi brachia tollunt.

A ſucceſſion of ſhort ſyllables gives the impreſſion of quick motion; as,

Sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile tempus.

The works of Homer and Virgil abound with inſtances of this beauty; which are ſo often quoted, and ſo well known, that it is unneceſſary to produce them.

The third ſet of objects, which the ſound of words is capable of repreſenting, conſiſts of emotions and paſſions of the mind. Between ſenſe and ſound there appears to be no natural reſemblance. But, if the arrangement of ſyllables by their ſound alone recall one ſet of ideas more readily, than another; and diſpoſe the mind for entering into that affection, which the poet intends to raiſe; ſuch arrangement may with propriety be ſaid to reſemble the ſenſe. Thus, when pleaſure, joy,

and agreeable objects are described by one, who feels his subject; the language naturally runs in smooth, liquid, and flowing numbers.

——————Namque ipsa decoram
Cæsariem nato genetrix, lumenque juventæ
Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflarat honores.

Brisk and lively sensations exact quicker and more animated numbers.

——————Juvenum manus emicat ardens
Littus in Hesperium.

Melancholy and gloomy subjects are naturally connected with slow measures and long words.

In those deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heavenly pensive contemplation dwells.

Abundant instances of this kind are suggested by a moderate acquaintance with good poets, either antient or modern.

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

FIGURES may be described to be that language, which is prompted either by the imagination or passions. They are commonly divided by rhetoricians into two great classes, figures of words, and figures of thought.

The former are commonly called tropes, and conſiſt in a word's being uſed to ſignify ſomething different from its original meaning. Hence, if the word be changed, the figure is deſtroyed. Thus, for inſtance, "Light "ariſeth to the upright in darkneſs." Here the trope conſiſts in "light and darkneſs" not being taken literally, but ſubſtituted for comfort and adverſity; to which conditions of life they are ſuppoſed to bear ſome reſemblance. The other claſs, termed figures of thought, ſuppoſes the figure to conſiſt in the ſentiment only, while the words are uſed in their literal ſenſe; as in exclamations, interrogations, apoſtrophes, and compariſons; where, though the words be varied, or tranſlated from one language into another, the ſame figure is ſtill preſerved. This diſtinction however is of ſmall importance; as practice cannot be aſſiſted by it; nor is it always very perſpicuous.

Tropes are derived in part from the barrenneſs of language; but principally from the influence, which the imagination has over all language. The imagination never contemplates any one idea or object, as ſingle and alone; but as accompanied by others, which may be conſidered, as its acceſſories. Theſe acceſſories often operate more forcibly upon the mind, than the principal idea itſelf. They are perhaps in their nature more agreeable; or more familiar to our conceptions; or remind us of a greater variety of important circum-

ſtances. Hence the name of the acceſſory or correſpondent idea is ſubſtituted; although the principal has a proper and well known name of its own. Thus, for example, when we deſign to point out the period, in which a ſtate enjoyed moſt reputation or glory, we might eaſily employ the proper words for expreſſing this; but, as this in our imagination is readily connected with the flouriſhing period of a plant or tree, we prefer this correſpondent idea, and ſay, "The Roman "Empire flouriſhed moſt under Auguſtus." The leader of a faction is a plain expreſſion; but, becauſe the head is the principal part of the human body, and is ſuppoſed to direct all the animal operations; reſting on this reſemblance, we ſay, "Catiline was the head of "his party."

We ſhall now examine, why tropes and figures contribute to the beauty and grace of ſtyle. By them language is enriched, and made more copious. Hence words and phraſes are multiplied for expreſſing all ſorts of ideas; for deſcribing even the ſmalleſt differences; the niceſt ſhades and colors of thought; which by proper words alone cannot poſſibly be expreſſed. They alſo give dignity to ſtyle, which is degraded by the familiarity of common words. Figures have the ſame effect on language, that a rich and ſplendid apparel has on a perſon of rank and dignity. In proſe compoſitions aſſiſtance of this kind is often requiſite; to poet-

ry it is eſſential. To ſay, "the ſun riſes," is common and trite; but it becomes a magnificent image, as expreſſed by Thompſon;

> But yonder comes the powerful king of day
> Rejoicing in the eaſt.———

Figures furniſh the pleaſure of enjoying two objects, preſented at the ſame time to our view, without confuſion; the principal idea together with its acceſſory, which gives it the figurative appearance. When, for example, inſtead of "youth," we ſay, "the morning of "life;" the fancy is inſtantly entertained with all the correſponding circumſtances between theſe two objects. At the ſame inſtant we behold a certain period of human life and a certain time of the day ſo connected, that the imagination plays between them with delight, and views at once two ſimilar objects without embarraſſment.

Figures are alſo attended with the additional advantage of giving us a more clear and ſtriking view of the principal object, than if it were expreſſed in ſimple terms, and freed from it acceſſory idea. They exhibit the object, on which they are employed, in a pictureſque form; they render an abſtract conception in ſome degree an object of ſenſe; they ſurround it with circumſtances, which enable the mind to lay hold of it ſteadily, and to contemplate it fully. By a well adapted figure even conviction is aſſiſted, and a truth is impreſſed up-

on the mind with additional livelineſs and force. Thus in the following paſſage of Dr. Young; "When we "dip too deep in pleaſure, we always ſtir a ſediment, "that renders it impure and noxious." When an image preſents ſuch a reſemblance between a moral and a ſenſible idea, it ſerves, like an argument from analogy, to enforce what the author advances, and to induce belief.

All tropes being founded on the relation, which one object bears to another, the name of the one may be ſubſtituted for that of the other; and by this the vivacity of the idea is generally increaſed. The relation between a cauſe and its effect is one of the firſt and moſt obvious. Hence the cauſe is ſometimes figuratively put for the effect. Thus Mr. Addiſon, writing of Italy, ſays,

> Bloſſoms, and fruits, and flowers together riſe,
> And the whole year in gay confuſion lies.

Here the "whole year" is plainly meant to ſignify the productions of the year. The effect is alſo often put for the cauſe; as "grey hairs" for "old age," which produces grey hairs; and "ſhade" for the "trees," which cauſe the ſhade. The relation between the container and the thing contained is ſo intimate and apparent, as naturally to give riſe to tropes.

> ——————Ille impiger hauſit
> Spumantem pateram, et pleno ſe proluit auro.

Where it is obvious, that the cup and gold are put for the liquor, contained in the golden cup. The name of a country is often uſed to ſignify its inhabitants. To pray for the aſſiſtance of Heaven is the ſame with praying for the aſſiſtance of God, who is in Heaven. The relation between a ſign and the thing ſignified is another ſource of tropes. Thus,

Cedant arma togæ; concedat laurea linguæ.

Here the "toga," which is the badge of the civil profeſſions, and the "laurel," that of military honors, are each of them put for the civil and military characters themſelves. Tropes, founded on theſe ſeveral relations of cauſe and effect, container and contained, ſign and thing ſignified, are called by the name of metonomy.

When a trope is founded on the relation between an antecedent and its conſequent, it is called a metalepſis; as in the Roman phraſe, "fuit," or "vixit," to ſignify that one was dead. "Fuit Ilium et ingens gloria Teucrum" expreſſes that the glory of Troy is no more.

When the whole is put for a part, or a part for the whole; a genus for a ſpecies, or a ſpecies for a genus; the ſingular number for the plural, or the plural for the ſingular; in general, when any thing leſs, or any thing more, is put for the preciſe object meant;

the figure is then termed a ſynecdoche. We ſay, for inſtance, "A fleet of ſo many ſail" inſtead of ſo many "ſhips;" we frequently uſe the "head" for the "perſon," the "pole" for the "earth," the "waves" for the "ſea." An attribute is often uſed for its ſubject; as "youth and beauty" for the "young and beautiful;" and ſometimes a ſubject for its attribute. But the relation, by far the moſt fruitful of tropes, is ſimilitude, which is the ſole foundation of metaphor.

METAPHOR.

METAPHOR is founded entirely on the reſemblance, which one object bears to another. It is therefore nearly allied to ſimile or compariſon; and is indeed a compariſon in an abridged form. When we ſay of a great miniſter, "he upholds the ſtate, like a pillar, "which ſupports the weight of an edifice," we evidently make a compariſon; but, when we ſay of him, he is "the pillar of the ſtate," it becomes a metaphor.

Of all the Figures of ſpeech none approaches ſo near to painting, as metaphor. It gives light and ſtrength to deſcription; makes intellectual ideas in ſome degree viſible by giving them color, ſubſtance, and ſenſible qualities. To produce this effect however a delicate hand is requiſite; for by a little inaccuracy we may introduce confuſion inſtead of promoting perſpicuity,

Several rules therefore muſt be given for the proper management of metaphors.

The firſt rule reſpecting metaphors is, they muſt be ſuited to the nature of the ſubject; neither too numerous, nor too gay, nor too elevated for it; we muſt neither attempt to force the ſubject by the uſe of them into a degree of elevation, not congruous to it; nor on the contrary ſuffer it to fall below its proper dignity. Some metaphors are beautiful in poetry, which would be unnatural in proſe; ſome are graceful in orations, which would be highly improper in hiſtorical or philoſophical compoſitions. Figures are the dreſs of ſentiment. They ſhould conſequently be adapted to the ideas, which they are intended to adorn.

The ſecond rule reſpects the choice of objects, whence metaphors are to be drawn. The field for figurative language is very wide. All nature opens her ſtores and allows us to collect them without reſtraint. But we muſt beware of uſing ſuch alluſions, as raiſe in the mind diſagreeable, mean, low, or dirty ideas. To render a metaphor perfect, it muſt not only be apt, but pleaſing; it muſt entertain as well, as enlighten. Dryden therefore can hardly eſcape the imputation of a very unpardonable breach of delicacy, when he obſerves to the Earl of Dorſet, that "ſome bad poems "carry their owners' marks about them; ſome brand "or other on this *buttock*, or that *ear*; that it is notorious,

"who are the owners of the cattle." The moſtp leaſing metaphors are derived from the frequent occurrences of art and nature, or from the civil tranſactions and cuſtoms of mankind. Thus how expreſſive, yet at the ſame time how familiar, is the image, which Otway has put into the mouth of Metellus in his play of Caius Marius, where he calls Sulpicius

> That mad wild bull, whom Marius lets looſe
> On each occaſion, when he'd make Rome feel him,
> To toſs our laws and liberties in the air.

In the third place a metaphor ſhould be founded on a reſemblance, which is clear and ſtriking, not far fetched, nor difficult to be diſcovered. Harſh or forced metaphors are always diſpleaſing, becauſe they perplex the reader, and inſtead of illuſtrating the thought render it intricate and confuſed. Thus, for inſtance, Cowley, ſpeaking of his miſtreſs, expreſſes himſelf in the following forced and obſcure verſes.

> Wo to her ſtubborn heart; if once mine come
> Into the ſelfſame room,
> 'Twill tear and blow up all within,
> Like a granada, ſhot into a magazine.
> Then ſhall love keep the aſhes and torn parts
> Of both our broken hearts;
> Shall out of both one new one make;
> From hers the alloy, from mine the metal take;
> For of her heart he from the flames will find
> But little left behind;

Mine only will remain entire;
No droſs was there, to periſh in the fire.

Metaphors, borrowed from any of the ſciences, eſpecially from particular profeſſions, are almoſt always faulty by their obſcurity.

In the fourth place we muſt never jumble metaphorical and plain language together; never conſtruct a period ſo, that part of it muſt be underſtood metaphorically, part literally; which always produces confuſion. The works of Oſſian afford an inſtance of the fault, we are now cenſuring. "Trothal went forth with the "ſtream of his people, but they met a rock; for Fingal "ſtood unmoved; broken they rolled back from his "ſide. Nor did they roll in ſafety; the ſpear of the "king purſued their flight." The metaphor at the beginning is beautiful; the "ſtream," the "unmoved "rock," the "waves rolling back broken," are expreſſions in the proper and conſiſtent language of figure; but in the end, when we are told, "they did not roll "in ſafety, becauſe the ſpear of the king purſu-"ed their flight," the literal meaning is injudiciouſly mixed with the metaphor; they are at the ſame moment preſented to us, as waves that *roll*, and as men, that may be *purſued* and *wounded by a ſpear*.

In the fifth place take care not to make two different metaphors meet on the ſame object. This, which is called mixed metaphor, is one of the groſſeſt abuſes

of this figure. Shakeſpeare's expreſſion, for example, "to take arms againſt a ſea of troubles," makes a moſt unnatural medly, and entirely confounds the imagination. More correct writers, than Shakeſpeare, are ſometimes guilty of this error. Mr. Addiſon ſays, "There "is not a ſingle view of human nature, which is not "ſufficient to extinguiſh the ſeeds of pride." Here a *view* is made to *extinguiſh*, and to *extinguiſh ſeeds*.

In examining the propriety of metaphors it is a good rule, to form a picture of them, and to conſider how the parts agree, and what kind of figure, the whole preſents, when delineated with a pencil.

Metaphors in the ſixth place ſhould not be crowded together on the ſame object. Though each of them be diſtinct; yet, if they be heaped on one another, they produce confuſion. The following paſſage from Horace will exemplify this obſervation;

Motum ex Metello conſule civicum
Bellique cauſas, et vitia, et modos,
Ludumque fortunæ, graveſque
Principum amicitias, et arma
Nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus,
Periculoſæ plenum opus alcæ,
Tractas, et incedis per ignes
Suppoſitos cineri doloſo.

This paſſage, though very poetical, is rendered harſh and obſcure by three diſtinct metaphors crowded to-

gether. First, "*arma uncta cruoribus nondum expiatis*;" next, "*opus plenum periculoſæ aleæ*;" and then, "*incedis "per ignes ſuppoſitos cineri doloſo.*"

The laſt rule concerning metaphors is, they ſhould not be too far purſued. For, when the reſemblance, which is the foundation of the figure, is long dwelt upon, and carried into all its minute circumſtances, an allegory is produced inſtead of a metaphor; the reader is wearied, and the diſcourſe becomes obſcure. This is termed ſtraining a metaphor. Dr. Young, whoſe imagination was more diſtinguiſhed by ſtrength, than delicacy, is often guilty of running down his metaphors. Speaking of old age, he ſays, it ſhould

> Walk thoughtful on the ſilent, ſolemn ſhore
> Of that vaſt ocean, it muſt ſail ſo ſoon;
> And put good works on board; and wait the wind,
> That ſhortly blows us into worlds unknown.

The two firſt lines are uncommonly beautiful; but, when he continues the metaphor by "putting good "works on board, and waiting the wind," it is ſtrained, and ſinks in dignity.

Having treated of metaphor, we ſhall conclude this chapter with a few words concerning allegory.

An allegory is a continued metaphor; as it is the repreſentation of one thing by another, that reſembles it. Thus Prior makes Emma deſcribe her conſtancy to Henry in the following allegorical manner;

Did I but purpoſe to embark with thee
On the ſmooth ſurface of a ſummer's ſea,
While gentle zephyrs play with proſperous gales,
And fortune's favor fills the ſwelling ſails;
But would forſake the ſhip, and make the ſhore,
When the winds whiſtle, and the tempeſts roar?

The ſame rules, that were given for metaphors, may be applied to allegories on account of the affinity between them. The only material difference beſide the one being ſhort and the other prolonged is, that a metaphor always explains itſelf by the words, that are connected with it in their proper and literal meaning; as, when we ſay, "Achilles was a lion;" "an able miniſter is the pillar of the ſtate." Lion and pillar are here ſufficiently interpreted by the mention of Achilles and the miniſter, which are joined to them; but an allegory may be allowed to ſtand leſs connected with the literal meaning; the interpretation not being ſo plainly pointed out, but left to our own reflection.

HYPERBOLE.

HYPERBOLE conſiſts in magnifying an object beyond its natural bounds. This figure occurs very frequently in all languages even in common converſation. As ſwift, as the wind; as white, as ſnow; and our uſual forms of compliment are in general extravagant

hyperboles. From habit however theſe exaggerated expreſſions are ſeldom conſidered, as hyperbolical.

Hyperboles are of two kinds; ſuch, as are employed in deſcription, or ſuch, as are ſuggeſted by paſſion. Thoſe are far beſt, which are the effect of paſſion; ſince it not only gives riſe to the moſt daring figures, but often renders them juſt and natural. Hence the following paſſage in Milton, though extremely hyperbolical, contains nothing, but what is natural and proper. It exhibits the mind of Satan agitated by rage and deſpair.

> Me miſerable! Which way ſhall I fly
> Infinite wrath, and infinite deſpair?
> Which way I fly is hell; myſelf am hell;
> And in the loweſt depth a lower deep,
> Still threatening to devour me, opens wide,
> To which the hell, I ſuffer, ſeems a Heaven.

In ſimple deſcription hyperboles muſt be employed with more caution. When an earthquake or ſtorm is deſcribed, or when our imagination is carried into the midſt of a battle, we can bear ſtrong hyperboles without diſpleaſure. But, when only a woman in grief is preſented to our view, it is impoſſible not to be diſguſted with ſuch exaggeration, as the following, in one of our dramatic poets;

> ——I found her on the floor
> In all the ſtorm of grief, yet beautiful,

Pouring forth tears at ſuch a laviſh rate,
That, were the world on fire, they might have drown'd
The wrath of Heaven, and quench'd the mighty ruin.

This is mere bombaſt. The perſon herſelf, who labored under the diſtracting agitations of grief, might be permitted to expreſs herſelf in ſtrong hyperbole; but the ſpectator, who deſcribes her, cannot be allowed equal liberty. The juſt boundary of this figure cannot be aſcertained by any preciſe rule. Good ſenſe and an accurate taſte muſt aſcertain the limit, beyond which, if it paſs, it becomes extravagant.

PERSONIFICATION AND APOSTROPHE.

WE proceed now to thoſe figures, which lie altogether in the thought, the words being taken in their common and literal ſenſe. We ſhall begin with perſonification, by which life and action are attributed to inanimate objects. All poetry even in its moſt humble form abounds in this figure. From proſe it is far from being excluded; nay, even in common converſation frequent approaches are made to it. When we ſay, the earth *thirſts* for rain, or the fields *ſmile* with plenty; when ambition is ſaid to be *reſtleſs*, or a diſeaſe to be *deceitful*; ſuch expreſſions ſhow the facility, with which the mind can accommodate the properties of living creatures to things inanimate, or abſtract conceptions.

There are three different degrees of this figure; which it is requiſite to diſtinguiſh, in order to determine the propriety of its uſe. The firſt is, when ſome of the properties of living creatures are aſcribed to inanimate objects; the ſecond, when thoſe inanimate objects are deſcribed, as acting like ſuch, as have life; and the third, when they are exhibited, either as ſpeaking to us, or as liſtening to what we ſay to them.

The firſt and loweſt degree of this figure, which conſiſts in aſcribing to inanimate objects ſome of the qualities of living creatures, raiſes the ſtyle ſo little, that the humbleſt diſcourſe admits it without any force. Thus, "a raging ſtorm, a deceitful diſeaſe, a cruel diſaſter," are familiar expreſſions. This indeed is ſo obſcure a degree of perſonification, that it might perhaps be properly claſſed with ſimple metaphors, which almoſt eſcape our obſervation.

The ſecond degree of this figure is, when we repreſent inanimate objects acting like thoſe, that have life. Here we riſe a ſtep higher, and the perſonification becomes ſenſible. According to the nature of the action, which we aſcribe to thoſe inanimate objects, and to the particularity, with which we deſcribe it, is the ſtrength of the figure. When purſued to a conſiderable length, it belongs only to ſtudied harangues; when ſlightly touched, it may be admitted into leſs elevated compoſitions. Cicero, for example, ſpeaking of the caſes,

where killing a man is lawful in self defence, uses the following expressions; "*Aliquando nobis gladius ad occidendum hominem ab ipsis porrigitur legibus.*" Here the laws are beautifully personified, as reaching forth their hand, to give us a sword for putting a man to death.

In poetry personifications of this kind are extremely frequent, and are indeed the life and soul of it. In the descriptions of a poet, who has a lively fancy, every thing is animated. Homer, the father of poetry, is remarkable for the use of this figure. War, peace, darts, rivers, every thing in short is alive in his writings. The same is true of Milton and Shakespeare. No personification is more striking, or introduced on a more proper occasion, than the following of Milton upon Eve's eating the forbidden fruit;

> So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
> Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she ate;
> Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat,
> Sighing thro' all her works, gave signs of wo,
> That all was lost.

The third and highest degree of this figure is yet to be mentioned; when inanimate objects are represented, not only as feeling and acting, but as speaking to us, or listening, while we address them. This is the boldest of all rhetorical figures; it is the style of strong passion only; and therefore should never be attempted, except when the mind is considerably heated and agitated.

Milton affords a very beautiful example of this figure in that moving and tender addreſs, which Eve makes to Paradiſe immediately before ſhe is compelled to leave it.

Oh, unexpected ſtroke, worſe than of death!
Muſt I thus leave thee, Paradiſe? Thus leave
Thee, native ſoil; theſe happy walks and ſhades,
Fit haunt of Gods; where I had hope to ſpend
Quiet, though ſad, the reſpite of that day,
Which muſt be mortal to us both? O flowers,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early viſitation, and my laſt
At even; which I bred up with tender hand
From your firſt opening buds, and gave you names;
Who now ſhall rear you to the ſun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from the ambroſial fount?

This is the real language of nature and of female paſſion.

In the management of this ſort of perſonification two rules are to be obſerved. Firſt, never attempt it, unleſs prompted by ſtrong paſſion, and never continue it, when the paſſion begins to ſubſide. The ſecond rule is, never perſonify an object, which has not ſome dignity in itſelf, and which is incapable of making a proper figure in the elevation, to which we raiſe it. To addreſs the body of a deceaſed friend is natural; but to addreſs the clothes, which he wore, introduces low and degrading ideas. So likewiſe addreſſing the ſeveral

parts of the body, as if they were animated, is not agreeable to the dignity of paſſion. For this reaſon the following paſſage in Pope's Eloiſa to Abelard is liable to cenſure.

> Dear fatal name, reſt ever unreveal'd,
> Nor paſs theſe lips, in holy ſilence ſeal'd.
> Hide it, my heart, within that cloſe diſguiſe,
> Where, mix'd with Gods, his lov'd idea lies;
> O, write it not, my hand;—his name appears
> Already written—blot it out, my tears.

Here the name of Abelard is firſt perſonified; which, as the name of a perſon often ſtands for the perſon himſelf, is expoſed to no objection. Next Eloiſa perſonifies her own heart; and, as the heart is a dignified part of the human frame, and is often put for the mind, this alſo may paſs without cenſure. But, when ſhe addreſſes her hand, and tells it not to write his name, this is forced and unnatural. Yet the figure becomes ſtill worſe, when ſhe exhorts her tears to blot out, what her hand had written. The two laſt lines are indeed altogether unſuitable to the tenderneſs, which breathes through the reſt of that inimitable poem.

APOSTROPHE is an addreſs to a real perſon; but one, who is either abſent or dead, as if he were preſent, and liſtening to us. This figure is in boldneſs a degree lower, than perſonification; ſince it requires leſs effort of imagination to ſuppoſe perſons preſent, who

are dead or abſent, than to animate inſenſible beings, and direct our diſcourſe to them. The poems of Oſſian abound in beautiful inſtances of this figure. "Weep on "the rocks of roaring winds, O Maid of Iniſtore. "Bend thy fair head over the waves, thou fairer, than "the ghoſt of the hills, when it moves in a ſunbeam at "noon over the ſilence of Morven. He is fallen. Thy "youth is low; pale beneath the ſword of Cuchullin."

COMPARISON, ANTITHESIS, INTERROGATION, EXCLAMATION, AND OTHER FIGURES OF SPEECH.

A Compariſon or ſimile is, when the reſemblance between two objects is expreſſed in form, and uſually purſued more fully, than the nature of a metaphor admits. As when we ſay, "The actions of princes are "like thoſe great rivers, the courſe of which every one "beholds, but their ſprings have been ſeen by few." This ſhort inſtance will ſhow that a happy compariſon is a ſort of ſparkling ornament, which adds luſtre and beauty to diſcourſe.

All compariſons may be reduced under two heads; *explaining* and *embelliſhing* compariſons. For, when a writer compares an object with any other thing, it always is, or ought to be, with a view to make us under-

ſtand that object more clearly, or to render it more pleaſing. Even abſtract reaſoning admits explaining compariſons. For inſtance, the diſtinction between the powers of ſenſe and imagination is in Mr. Harris's Hermes illuſtrated by a ſimile; "As wax," ſays he, "would "not be adequate to the purpoſe of ſignature, if "it had not the power to retain as well, as to receive "the impreſſion; the ſame holds of the ſoul with re-"ſpect to ſenſe and imagination. Senſe is its receptive "power, and imagination its retentive. Had it ſenſe "without imagination, it would not be as wax, but as "water; where, though all impreſſions be inſtantly "made, yet as ſoon, as they are made, they are loſt." In compariſons of this kind perſpicuity and uſefulneſs are chiefly to be ſtudied.

But embelliſhing compariſons are thoſe, which moſt frequently occur. Reſemblance, it has been obſerved, is the foundation of this figure. Yet reſemblance muſt not be taken in too ſtrict a ſenſe for actual ſimilitude. Two object may raiſe a train of concordant ideas in the mind, though they reſemble each other, ſtrictly ſpeaking, in nothing. For example, to deſcribe the nature of ſoft and melancholy muſic, Oſſian ſays, "The muſic "of Carryl was, like the memory of joys, that are paſt, "pleaſant and mournful to the ſoul." This is happy and delicate; yet no kind of muſic bears any reſemblance to the memory of paſt joys.

We ſhall now conſider, when compariſons may be introduced with propriety. Since they are the language of imagination rather, than of paſſion, an author can hardly commit a greater fault, than in the midſt of paſſion to introduce a ſimile. Our writers of tragedies often err in this reſpect. Thus Addiſon in his Cato makes Portius, juſt after Lucia had bid him farewell for ever, expreſs himſelf in a ſtudied compariſon.

> Thus o'er the dying lamp the unſteady flame
> Hangs quivering on a point, leaps off by fits,
> And falls again, as loath to quit its hold.
> Thou muſt not go; my ſoul ſtill hovers o'er thee,
> And can't get looſe.

As compariſon is not the ſtyle of ſtrong paſſion; ſo, when deſigned for embelliſhment, it is not the language of a mind totally unmoved. Being a figure of dignity, it always requires ſome elevation in the ſubject, to make it proper. It ſuppoſes the imagination to be enlivened, though the heart is not agitated by paſſion. The language of ſimile lies in the middle region between the highly pathetic and the very humble ſtyle. It is however a ſparkling ornament; and muſt conſequently dazzle and fatigue, if it recur too often. Similies even in poetry ſhould be employed with moderation; but in proſe much more ſo; otherwiſe the ſtyle will become diſguſtingly luſcious, and the ornament loſe its beauty and effect.

We ſhall now conſider the nature of thoſe objects, from which compariſons ſhould be drawn.

In the firſt place they muſt not be drawn from things, which have too near and obvious a reſemblance of the object, with which they are compared. The pleaſure, we receive from the act of comparing, ariſes from the diſcovery of likeneſſes among things of different ſpecies, where we ſhould not at firſt ſight expect a reſemblance.

But in the ſecond place, as compariſons ought not to be founded on likeneſſes too obvious; much leſs ought they to be founded on thoſe, which are too faint and diſtant. Theſe inſtead of aſſiſting ſtrain the fancy to comprehend them, and throw no light upon the ſubject.

In the third place the object, from which a compariſon is drawn, ought never to be an unknown object, nor one, of which few people can have a clear idea. Therefore ſimilies, founded on philoſophical diſcoveries, or on any thing, with which perſons of a particular trade only, or a particular profeſſion, are acquainted, produce not their proper effect. They ſhould be drawn from thoſe illuſtrious and noted objects, which moſt readers have either ſeen, or can ſtrongly conceive.

In the fourth place in compoſitions of a ſerious or elevated kind ſimilies ſhould never be drawn from low

or mean objects. These degrade and vilify; whereas similies are generally intended to embellish and dignify. Therefore, except in burlesque writings, or where an object is meant to be degraded, mean ideas should never be prefented.

ANTITHESIS is founded on the contraft or oppofition of two objects. By contraft objects, oppofed to each other, appear in a ftronger light. Beauty, for inftance, never appears fo charming, as when contrafted with uglinefs. Antithefis therefore may on many occafions be ufed advantageoufly, to ftrengthen the impreffion, which we propofe that any object fhould make. Thus Cicero in his oration for Milo, repreferting the improbability of Milo's defigning to take away the life of Clodius, when every thing was unfavorable to fuch defign, after he had omitted many opportunities of effecting fuch a purpofe, heightens our conviction of this improbability by a fkilful ufe of this figure. "*Quem igitur cum* "*omnium gratia interficere noluit; hunc voluit cum aliquo-* "*rum querela? Quem jure, quem loco, quem tempore, quem* "*impune, non eft aufus; hunc injuria, iniquo loco, alieno* "*tempore, periculo capitis, non dubitavit occidere?*" Here the antithefis is rendered complete by the words and members of the fentence, expreffing the contrafted objects, being fimilarly conftructed, and made to correfpond with each other.

We muft however acknowledge that frequent ufe of

antitheſis, eſpecially where the oppoſition in the words is nice and quaint, is apt to make ſtyle unpleaſing. A maxim or moral ſaying very properly receives this form; becauſe it is ſuppoſed to be the effect of meditation, and is deſigned to be engraven on the memory, which recalls it more eaſily by the aid of contraſted expreſſions. But, where ſeveral ſuch ſentences ſucceed each other; where this is an author's favorite and prevailing mode of expreſſion; his ſtyle is expoſed to cenſure.

INTERROGATIONS and Exclamations are paſſionate figures. The literal uſe of interrogation is to aſk a queſtion; but, when men are prompted by paſſion, whatever they would affirm, or deny with great earneſtneſs, they naturally put in the form of a queſtion; expreſſing thereby the firmeſt confidence of the truth of their own opinion; and appealing to their hearers for the impoſſibility of the contrary. Thus in ſcripture; "God is not a man, that he ſhould lie; nor the ſon of "man, that he ſhould repent. Hath he ſaid it? And "ſhall he not do it? Hath he ſpoken it? And ſhall he "not make it good?"

Interrogations may be employed in the proſecution of cloſe and earneſt reaſoning; but exclamations belong only to ſtronger emotions of the mind; to ſurpriſe, anger, joy, grief, and the like. Theſe, being natural ſigns of a moved and agitated mind, always, when properly employed, make us ſympathiſe with thoſe,

who uſe them, and enter into their feelings. Nothing however has a worſe effect, than frequent and unſeaſonable uſe of exclamations. Young, unexperienced writers ſuppoſe that by pouring them forth plenteouſly they render their compoſitions warm and animated. But the contrary follows; they render them frigid to exceſs. When an author is always calling upon us to enter into tranſports, which he has ſaid nothing to inſpire, he excites our diſguſt and indignation.

Another figure of ſpeech, fit only for animated compoſition, is called VISION; when inſtead of relating ſomething, that is paſt, we uſe the preſent tenſe, and deſcribe it, as if paſſing before our eyes. Thus Cicero in his fourth oration againſt Catiline; "*Videor enim* "*mihi hanc urbem videre, lucem orbis terrarum atque arcem* "*omnium gentium, ſubito uno incendio concidentum; cerno* "*animo ſepulta in patria miſeros atque inſepultos acervos ci-*"*vium; verſatur mihi ante oculos aſpectus Cethegi, et furor,* "*in veſtra cade bacchantis.*" This figure has great force, when it is well executed, and when it flows from genuine enthuſiaſm. Otherwiſe it ſhares the ſame fate with all feeble attempts toward paſſionate figures; that of throwing ridicule upon the author, and leaving the reader more cool and unintereſted, than he was before.

The laſt figure, which we ſhall mention, and which is of frequent uſe among all public ſpeakers, is CLIMAX.

It conſiſts in an artful exaggeration of all the circumſtances of ſome object or action, which we wiſh to place in a ſtrong light. It operates by a gradual riſe of one circumſtance above another, till our idea is raiſed to the higheſt pitch. We ſhall give an inſtance of this figure from a printed pleading of a celebrated Lawyer in a charge to the jury in the caſe of a woman, who was accuſed of murdering her own child. "Gentlemen, if "one man had any how ſlain another; if an adverſary "had killed his oppoſer; or a woman occaſioned the "death of her enemy; even theſe criminals would have "been capitally puniſhed by the Cornelian law. But, "if this guiltleſs infant, who could make no enemy, "had been murdered by its own nurſe; what puniſh-"ments would not the mother have demanded? With "what cries and exclamations would ſhe have ſtunned "your ears? What ſhall we ſay then, when a woman, "guilty of homicide; a mother, of the muder of her "innocent child, hath compriſed all thoſe miſdeeds in "one ſingle crime; a crime, in its own nature, deteſta-"ble; in a woman prodigious; in a mother incredi-"ble; and perpetrated againſt one, whoſe age called "for compaſſion; whoſe near relation claimed affection; "and whoſe innocence deſerved the higheſt favor?" Such regular climaxes however, though they have great beauty; yet at the ſame time have the appearance of art and ſtudy; and therefore, though they may be admitted into formal harangues; yet they are not the

language of paſſion, which ſeldom proceeds by ſteps ſo regular.

GENERAL CHARACTERS OF STYLE. DIFFUSE, CONCISE, FEEBLE, NERVOUS, DRY, PLAIN, NEAT, ELEGANT, FLOWERY.

THAT different ſubjects ought to be treated in different kinds of ſtyle is a poſition ſo obvious, that it requires no illuſtration. Every one knows that treatiſes of philoſophy ſhould not be compoſed in the ſame ſtyle with orations. It is equally apparent, that different parts of the ſame compoſition require a variation in the ſtyle. Yet amid this variety we ſtill expect to find in the compoſitions of any one man ſome degree of uniformity in manner; we expect to find ſome prevailing character of ſtyle impreſſed on all his writings, which will mark his particular genius and turn of mind. The orations in Livy differ conſiderably in ſtyle, as they ought to do, from the reſt of his hiſtory. The ſame may be obſerved in thoſe of Tacitus. Yet in the orations of both theſe hiſtorians the diſtinguiſhing manner of each may be clearly traced; the ſplendid fulneſs of the one, and the ſententious brevity of the other. Wherever this is real genius, it prompts to one kind of ſtyle rather, than to another. Where this is wanting; where there is no marked, nor peculiar character in the compoſitions of an author; we are apt to conclude, and

not without cauſe, that he is a vulgar and trivial author, who writes from imitation, and not from the impulſe of genius.

One of the firſt and moſt obvious diſtinctions in ſtyle ariſes from an author's expanding his thoughts more or leſs. This diſtinction forms, what are termed the diffuſe and conciſe ſtyles. A conciſe writer compreſſes his ideas into the feweſt words; he employs none, but the moſt expreſſive; he lops off all thoſe, which are not a material addition to the ſenſe. Whatever ornament he admits, is adopted for the ſake of force rather, than of grace. The ſame thought is never repeated. The utmoſt preciſion is ſtudied in his ſentences; and they are generally deſigned to ſuggeſt more to the reader's imagination, than they expreſs.

A diffuſe writer unfolds his idea fully. He places it in a variety of lights, and gives the reader every poſſible aſſiſtance for underſtanding it completely. He is not very anxious to expreſs it at firſt in its full ſtrength, becauſe he intends repeating the impreſſion; and, what he wants in ſtrength, he endeavors to ſupply by copiouſneſs. His periods naturally flow into ſome length, and, having room for ornament of every kind, he gives it free admittance.

Each of theſe ſtyles has its peculiar advantages; and each becomes faulty, when carried to the extreme. Of conciſeneſs carried as far, as propriety will allow, per-

haps in ſome caſes farther, Tacitus the hiſtorian and Monteſquieu in "l'Eſprit de Loix" are remarkable examples. Of a beautiful and magnificent diffuſeneſs Cicero is undoubtedly the nobleſt inſtance, which can be given. Addiſon alſo and Sir William Temple may be ranked in the ſame claſs.

In determining when to adopt the conciſe, and when the diffuſe manner, we muſt be guided by the nature of the compoſition. Diſcourſes, that are to be ſpoken, require a more diffuſe ſtyle than books, which are to be read. In written compoſitions a proper degree of conciſeneſs has great advantages. It is more lively; keeps up attention; makes a ſtronger impreſſion on the mind; and gratifies the reader by ſupplying more exerciſe to his thoughts. Deſcription, when we wiſh to have it vivid and animated, ſhould be conciſe. Any redundant words or circumſtances encumber the fancy, and render the object, we preſent to it, confuſed and indiſtinct. The ſtrength and vivacity of deſcription, whether in proſe or poetry, depend much more upon a happy choice of one or two important circumſtances, than upon the multiplication of them. When we deſire to ſtrike the fancy, or to move the heart, we ſhould be conciſe; when to inform the underſtanding, which is more deliberate in its motions, and wants the aſſiſtance of a guide, it is better to be full. Hiſtorical narration may be beautiful either in a conciſe or diffuſe manner

according to the author's genius. Livy and Herodotus are diffuse; Thucydides and Salluſt are conciſe; yet they are all agreeable.

The nervous and the feeble are generally conſidered, as characters of ſtyle of the ſame import with the conciſe and the diffuſe. Indeed they frequently coincide; yet this does not always hold; ſince there are inſtances of writers, who in the midſt of a full and ample ſtyle have maintained a conſiderable degree of ſtrength. Livy is an inſtance of the truth of this obſervation. The foundation of a nervous or weak ſtyle is laid in an author's manner of thinking. If he conceive an object ſtrongly, he will expreſs it with energy; but, if he have an indiſtinct view of his ſubject, it will clearly appear in his ſtyle. Unmeaning words and looſe epithets will eſcape him; his expreſſions will be vague and general; his arrangement indiſtinct; and our conception of his meaning will be faint and confuſed. But a nervous writer, be his ſtyle conciſe or extended, gives us always a ſtrong idea of his meaning. His mind being full of his ſubject, his words are always expreſſive; every phraſe and every figure renders the picture, which he would ſet before us, more ſtriking and complete.

It muſt however be obſerved, that too great ſtudy of ſtrength is apt to betray writers into a harſh manner. Harſhneſs proceeds from uncommon words, from forced inverſions in the conſtruction of a ſentence, and

from neglect of ſmoothneſs and eaſe. This is reckoned the fault of ſome of our earlieſt claſſics; ſuch, as Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Bacon, Hooker, Harrington, Cudworth, and other writers of conſiderable reputation in the days of Queen Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I. Theſe writers had nerves and ſtrength in a high degree; and are to this day diſtinguiſhed by this quality in ſtyle. But the language in their hands was very different from what it is now, and was indeed entirely formed upon the idiom and conſtruction of the Latin in the arrangement of ſentences. The preſent form of our language has in ſome degree ſacrificed the ſtudy of ſtrength to that of eaſe and perſpicuity. Our arrangement is leſs forcible, but more plain and natural; and this is now conſidered, as the genius of our tongue.

Hitherto ſtyle has been conſidered under theſe characters, which regard its expreſſiveneſs of an author's meaning. We ſhall now conſider it with reſpect to the degree of ornament, employed to embelliſh it. Here the ſtyle of different authors ſeem to riſe in the following gradation; a dry, a plain, a neat, an elegant, a flowery manner.

A dry manner excludes every kind of ornament. Content with being underſtood, it aims not to pleaſe either the fancy or the ear. This is tolerable only in pure didactic writing; and even there, to make us

bear it, great ſolidity of matter and entire perſpicuity of language are required.

A plain ſtyle riſes one degree above a dry one. A writer of this character employs very little ornament of any kind, and reſts almoſt entirely upon his ſenſe. But, though he does not engage us by the arts of compoſition, he avoids diſguſting us, like a dry and a harſh writer. Beſide perſpicuity he obſerves propriety, purity, and preciſion in his language; which form no inconſiderable degree of beauty. Livelineſs and force are alſo compatible with a plain ſtyle; and therefore ſuch an author, if his ſentiments be good, may be ſufficiently agreeable. The difference between a dry and a plain writer is this; the former is incapable of ornament; the latter goes not in purſuit of it. Of thoſe, who have employed the plain ſtyle, Dean Swift is an eminent example.

A neat ſtyle is next in order; and here we are advanced into the region of ornament; but not of the moſt ſparkling kind. A writer of this character ſhows by his attention to the choice of words and to their graceful collocation that he does not deſpiſe the beauty of language. His ſentences are always free from the incumbrance of ſuperfluous words; of a moderate length; inclining rather to brevity, than a ſwelling ſtructure; and cloſing with propriety. There is variety in his cadence; but no appearance of ſtudied har-

mony. His figures, if he uſe any, are ſhort and accurate rather, than bold and glowing. Such a ſtyle may be attained by a writer, whoſe powers of fancy or genius are not great, by induſtry and attention. This ſort of ſtyle is not unſuitable to any ſubject whatever. A familiar epiſtle, or a law paper on the drieſt ſubject, may be written with neatneſs; and a ſermon, or a philoſophical treatiſe in a neat ſtyle, is read with ſatisfaction.

An elegant ſtyle implies a higher degree of ornament, than a neat one; poſſeſſing all the virtues of ornament without any of its exceſſes or defects. Complete elegance implies great perſpicuity and propriety; purity in the choice of words; and care and ſkill in their arrangement. It implies farther the beauties of imagination ſpread over ſtyle as far, as the ſubject permits; and all the illuſtration, which figurative language adds, when properly employed. An elegant writer in ſhort is one, who delights the fancy and the ear, while he informs the underſtanding; who clothes his ideas in all the beauty of expreſſion, but does not overload them with any of its miſplaced finery.

A florid ſtyle implies exceſs of ornament. In a young compoſer it is not only pardonable, but often a promiſing ſymptom. But, although it may be allowed to youth in their firſt eſſays; it muſt not receive the ſame indulgence from writers of more experience. In them judgment ſhould chaſten imagination, and reject

every ornament, which is unſuitable or redundant. That tinſel ſplendor of language, which ſome writers perpetually affect, is truly contemptible. With ſuch it is a luxuriancy of words, not of fancy. They forget that, unleſs founded on good ſenſe and ſolid thought, the moſt florid ſtyle is but a childiſh impoſition on the public.

STYLE. SIMPLE, AFFECTED, VEHEMENT. DIRECTIONS FOR FORMING A PROPER STYLE.

SIMPLICITY, applied to writing, is a term very commonly uſed; but, like many other critical terms, often uſed without preciſion. The different meanings of the word ſimplicity are the chief cauſe of this inaccuracy. It is therefore neceſſary to ſhow, in what ſenſe ſimplicity is a proper attribute of ſtyle. There are four different acceptations, in which this term is taken.

The firſt is ſimplicity of compoſition, as oppoſed to too great a variety of parts. This is the ſimplicity of plan in tragedy, as diſtinguiſhed from double plots and crowded incidents; the ſimplicity of the Iliad in oppoſition to the digreſſions of Lucan; the ſimplicity of Grecian architecture in oppoſition to the irregular variety of the Gothic. Simplicity in this ſenſe is the ſame with unity.

The ſecond ſenſe is ſimplicity of thought in oppoſition to refinement. Simple thoughts are thoſe, which flow naturally; which are ſuggeſted by the ſubject or occaſion; and which, when once ſuggeſted, are eaſily underſtood by all. Refinement in writing means a leſs obvious and natural train of thought, which, when carried too far, approaches to intricacy, and diſpleaſes us by the appearance of being far ſought. Thus Parnell is a Poet of much greater ſimplicity in his turn of thought, than Cowley. In theſe two ſenſes ſimplicity has no relation to ſtyle.

The third ſenſe of ſimplicity regards ſtyle, and is oppoſed to too much ornament, or pomp of language. Thus we ſay Mr. Locke is a ſimple, Mr. Harvey a florid writer. A ſimple ſtyle, in this ſenſe, coincides with a plain or neat ſtyle.

The fourth ſenſe of ſimplicity alſo reſpects ſtyle; but it regards not ſo much the degree of ornament employed, as the eaſy and natural manner, in which our language expreſſes our thoughts. In this ſenſe ſimplicity is compatible with the higheſt ornament. Homer, for example, poſſeſſes this ſimplicity in the greateſt perfection; and yet no writer has more ornament and beauty. This ſimplicity is oppoſed not to ornament, but to affectation of ornament; and is a ſuperior excellence in compoſition.

A ſimple writer has no marks of art in his expreſſion; it appears the very language of nature. We ſee not the writer and his labor, but the man in his own natural character. He may be rich in expreſſion; he may be full of figures and of fancy; but theſe flow from him without effort; and he ſeems to write in this manner, not becauſe he has ſtudied it, but becauſe it is the mode of expreſſion moſt natural to him. With this character of ſtyle a certain degree of negligence is not inconſiſtent; for too accurate an attention to words is foreign to it. Simplicity of ſtyle, like ſimplicity of manners, ſhows a mans ſentiments and turn of mind without diſguiſe. A more ſtudied and artificial mode of writing, however beautiful, has always this diſadvantage, that it exhibits an author in form, like a man at court, where ſplendor of dreſs and the ceremonial of behaviour conceal thoſe peculiarities, which diſtinguiſh one man from another. But reading an author of ſimplicity is like converſing with a perſon of rank at home and with eaſe, where we ſee his natural manners and his real character.

With regard to ſimplicity in general we may obſerve, that the antient original writers are always moſt eminent for it. This proceeds from a very obvious cauſe; they wrote from the dictates of genius, and were not formed upon the labors and writings of others.

Of affectation, which is oppoſed to ſimplicity of ſtyle,

we have a remarkable example in Lord Shafteſbury. Though an author of conſiderable merit, he expreſſes nothing with ſimplicity. He ſeems to have thought it vulgar and beneath the dignity of a man of quality, to ſpeak like other men. Hence he is ever in buſkins; full of circumlocutions and artificial elegance. In every ſentence we ſee marks of labor and art; nothing of that eaſe, which expreſſes a ſentiment coming natural and warm from the heart. He abounds with figures and ornament of every kind; is ſometimes happy in them; but his fondneſs for them is too viſible; and, having once ſeized ſome metaphor or alluſion, that pleaſed him, he knows not how to part with it. He poſſeſſed delicacy and refinement of taſte in a degree, that may be called exceſſive and ſickly; but he had little warmth of paſſion; and the coldneſs of his character ſuggeſted that artificial and ſtately manner, which appears in his writings. No author is more dangerous to the tribe of imitators, than Shafteſbury; who amid ſeveral very conſiderable blemiſhes has many dazzling and impoſing beauties.

It is very poſſible however for an author to write with ſimplicity, and yet without beauty. He may be free from affectation, and not have merit. Beautiful ſimplicity ſuppoſes an author to poſſeſs real genius; and to write with ſolidity, purity, and brilliancy of imagination. In this caſe the ſimplicity of his manner is the

crowning ornament; it heightens every other beauty; it is the dress of nature, without which all beauties are imperfect. But, if mere absence of affectation were sufficient to constitute beauty of style; weak and dull writers might often lay claim to it. A distinction therefore must be made between that simplicity, which accompanies true genius and is entirely compatible with every proper ornament of style, and that, which is the effect of carelessness.

Another character of style, different from those already mentioned, is vehemence. This always implies strength; and is not in any respect incompatible with simplicity. It is distinguished by a peculiar ardor; it is the language of a man, whose imagination and passions are glowing and impetuous; who, neglecting inferior graces, pours himself forth with the rapidity and fullness of a torrent. This belongs to the higher kinds of oratory; and is rather expected from a man, who is speaking, than from one, who is writing in his closet. Demosthenes is the most full and perfect example of this kind of style.

Having explained the different characters of style, we shall conclude our observations with a few directions for attaining a good style in general.

The first direction is, study clear ideas of the subject, on which you are to write or speak. What we conceive clearly and feel strongly, we naturally ex-

preſs with clearneſs and ſtrength. We ſhould therefore think cloſely on the ſubject, till we have attained a full and diſtinct view of the matter, which we are to clothe in words; till we become warm and intereſted in it; then, and then only, ſhall we find expreſſion begin to flow.

Secondly, to the acquiſition of a good ſtyle frequency of compoſing is indiſpenſably neceſſary. But it is not every kind of compoſing, that will improve ſtyle. By a careleſs and haſty habit of writing a bad ſtyle will be acquired; more trouble will afterward be neceſſary to unlearn faults, then to become acquainted with the rudiments of compoſition. In the beginning therefore we ought to write ſlowly and with much care. Facility and ſpeed are the fruit of practice. We muſt be cautious however, not to retard the courſe of thought, nor cool the ardor of imagination, by pauſing too long on every word. On certain occaſions a glow of compoſition muſt be kept up, if we hope to expreſs ourſelves happily, though at the expenſe of ſome inaccuracies. A more ſevere examination muſt be the work of correction. What we have written, ſhould be laid by ſome time, till the ardor of compoſition be paſt; till partiality for our expreſſions be weakened, and the expreſſions themſelves be forgotten; and then, reviewing our work with a cool and critical eye, as if it were the performance of another, we ſhall diſcover many imperfections, which at firſt eſcaped us.

Thirdly, acquaintance with the ſtyle of the beſt authors is peculiarly requiſite. Hence a juſt taſte will be formed, and a copious fund of words ſupplied on every ſubject. No exerciſe perhaps will be found more uſeful for acquiring a proper ſtyle, than tranſlating ſome paſſage from an eminent author into our own words. Thus to take, for inſtance, a page of one of Addiſon's Spectators, and read it attentively two or three times, till we are in full poſſeſſion of the thoughts, it contains; then to lay aſide the book; to endeavour to write out the paſſage from memory as well as we can; and then to compare, what we have written, with the ſtyle of the author. Such an exerciſe will ſhew us our defects; will teach us to correct them; and from the variety of expreſſion, which it will exhibit, will conduct us to that, which is moſt beautiful.

Fourthly, caution muſt be uſed againſt ſervile imitation of any author whatever. Deſire of imitating hampers genius; and generally produces ſtiffneſs of expreſſion. They, who follow an author cloſely, commonly copy his faults as well, as his beauties. No one will ever become a good writer or ſpeaker, who has not ſome confidence in his own genius. We ought carefully to avoid uſing any author's peculiar phraſes, and of tranſcribing paſſages from him. Such a habit will be fatal to all genuine compoſition. It is much better to have ſomething of our own, though of moderate beauty, than

to ſhine in borrowed ornaments, which will at laſt betray the poverty of our genius.

Fifthly, always adapt your ſtyle to the ſubject, and likewiſe to the capacity of your hearers, if you are to ſpeak in public. To attempt a poetical ſtyle, when it ſhould be our buſineſs only to reaſon, is in the higheſt degree awkward and abſurd. To ſpeak with elaborate pomp of words before thoſe, who cannot comprehend them, is equally ridiculous. When we are to write or ſpeak, we ſhould previouſly fix in our minds a clear idea of the end aimed at; keep this ſteadily in view, and adapt our ſtyle to it.

Laſtly, let not attention to ſtyle engroſs us ſo much, as to prevent a higher degree of attention to the thoughts. This rule is more neceſſary, ſince the preſent taſte of the age is directed more to ſtyle, than to thought. It is much more eaſy to dreſs up trifling and common thoughts with ſome beauty of expreſſion, than to afford a fund of vigorous, ingenious, and uſeful ſentiments. The latter requires genius; the former may be attained by induſtry. Hence the crowd of writers, who are rich in ſtyle, but poor in ſentiment. Cuſtom obliges us to be attentive to the ornaments of ſtyle, if we wiſh our labors to be read and admired. But he is a contemptible writer, who looks not beyond the dreſs of language; who lays not the chief ſtreſs upon his matter, and employs not ſuch ornaments of ſtyle to recommend it, as are manly, not foppiſh.

CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF MR. ADDISON'S STYLE IN NO. 411 OF THE SPECTATOR.

HAVING fully inſiſted on the ſubject of language, we ſhall now commence a critical analyſis of the ſtyle of ſome good author. This will ſuggeſt obſervations, which we have not hitherto had occaſion to make, and will ſhow in a practical light the uſe of theſe, which have been made.

Mr. Addiſon, though one of the moſt beautiful writers in our language, is not the moſt correct; a circumſtance, which makes his compoſition a proper ſubject of criticiſm. We proceed therefore to examine No. 411, the firſt of his celebrated eſſays on the pleaſures of the imagination in the ſixth volume of the Spectator. It begins thus;

Our ſight is the moſt perfect, and moſt delightful of all our ſenſes.

This ſentence is clear, preciſe and ſimple. The author in a few plain words lays down the propoſition, which he is going to illuſtrate. A firſt ſentence ſhould ſeldom be long, and never intricate.

He might have ſaid, *our ſight is the moſt perfect and the moſt delightful.* But in omitting to repeat the particle *the* he has been more judicious; for, as between *perfect*

and *delightful* there is no contraſt, ſuch a repetition is unneceſſary. He proceeds;

It fills the mind with the largeſt variety of ideas, converſes with its objects at the greateſt diſtance, and continues the longeſt in action, without being tired or ſatiated with its proper enjoyments.

This ſentence is remarkably harmonious, and well conſtructed. It is entirely perſpicuous. It is loaded with no unneceſſary words. That quality of a good ſentence, which we termed its unity, is here perfectly preſerved. The members of it alſo grow, and riſe above each other in ſound, till it is conducted to one of the moſt harmonious cloſes, which our language admits. It is moreover figurative without being too much ſo for the ſubject. There is no fault in it whatever, except this, the epithet *large*, which he applies to *variety*, is more commonly applied to extent, than to number. It is plain however, that he employed it, to avoid the repetition of the word *great*, which occurs immediately afterward.

The ſenſe of feeling can, indeed, give us a notion of extenſion, ſhape, and all other ideas that enter at the eye, except colours; but, at the ſame time, it is very much ſtraitened and confined in its operations, to the number, bulk, and diſtance of its particular objects. But is not every ſenſe confined as much, as the ſenſe of feeling, to the number, bulk, and diſtance of its own objects? The turn of expreſſion

is alſo very inaccurate, requiring the two words, *with regard*, to be inſerted after the word *operations*, in order to make the ſenſe clear and intelligible. The epithet *particular* ſeems to be uſed inſtead of *peculiar*; but theſe words, though often confounded, are of very different import. *Particular* is oppoſed to *general*; *peculiar* ſtands oppoſed to what is poſſeſſed in *common with others*.

Our ſight ſeems deſigned to ſupply all theſe defects, and may be conſidered as a more delicate and diffuſive kind of touch, that ſpreads itſelf over an infinite multitude of bodies, comprehends the largeſt figures, and brings into our reach ſome of the moſt remote parts of the univerſe.

This ſentence is perſpicuous, graceful, well arranged, and highly muſical. Its conſtruction is ſo ſimilar to that of the ſecond ſentence, that, had it immediately ſucceeded it, the ear would have been ſenſible of a faulty monotony. But the interpoſition of a period prevents this effect.

It is this ſenſe which furniſhes the imagination with its ideas; ſo that by the pleaſures of the imagination or fancy, (which I ſhall uſe promiſcuouſly) I here mean ſuch as ariſe from viſible objects, either when we have them actually in our view, or when we call up their ideas into our minds by paintings, ſtatues, deſcriptions, or any the like occaſion.

The parentheſis in the middle of this ſentence is not

clear. It ſhould have been, *terms which I ſhall uſe promiſcuouſly*; ſince the verb *uſe* does not relate to the pleaſures of the imagination, but to the terms, *fancy* and *imagination*, which were meant to be ſynonymous. To call a painting or a ſtatue *an occaſion* is not accurate; nor is it very proper to ſpeak of *calling up ideas by occaſions*. The common phraſe, *any ſuch means*, would have been more natural.

We cannot indeed have a ſingle image in the fancy, that did not make its firſt entrance through the ſight; but we have the power of retaining, altering, and compounding thoſe images which we have once received, into all the varieties of picture and viſion that are moſt agreeable to the imagination; for, by this faculty, a man in a dungeon is capable of entertaining himſelf with ſcenes and landſcapes more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole compaſs of nature.

In one member of this ſentence there is an inaccuracy in ſyntax. It is proper to ſay, *altering and compounding thoſe images which we have once received, into all the varieties of picture and viſion.* But we cannot with propriety ſay, *retaining them into all the varieties*; yet the arrangement requires this conſtruction. This error might have been avoided by arranging the paſſage in the following manner; "We have the power of retaining "thoſe images, which we have once received; and of "altering and compounding them into all the varieties "of picture and viſion." The latter part of the ſentence is clear and elegant.

There are few words in the Engliſh language, which are employed in a more looſe and uncircumſcribed ſenſe than thoſe of the fancy and the imagination.

Except when ſome aſſertion of conſequence is advanced, theſe little words, *it is* and *there are*, ought to be avoided, as redundant and enfeebling. The two firſt words of this ſentence therefore ſhould have been omitted. The article prefixed to *fancy and imagination* ought alſo to have been omitted, ſince he does not mean the powers of *the fancy and the imagination*, but the words only. The ſentence ſhould have run thus; "Few words "in the Engliſh language are employed in a more looſe "and uncircumſcribed ſenſe, than fancy and imagina-"tion."

I therefore thought it neceſſary to fix and determine the notion of theſe two words, as I intend to make uſe of them in the thread of my following ſpeculations, that the reader may conceive rightly what is the ſubject which I proceed upon.

The words *fix* and *determine*, though they may appear ſo, are not ſynonymous. We *fix*, what is looſe; we *determine*, what is *uncircumſcribed*. They may be viewed therefore, as applied here with peculiar delicacy.

The *notion of theſe words* is rather harſh, and is not ſo commonly uſed, as the *meaning of theſe words*. *As I intend to make uſe of them in the thread of my ſpeculations* is evidently faulty. A ſort of metaphor is improperly

mixed with words in their literal ſenſe. *The ſubject which I proceed upon* is an ungraceful cloſe of a ſentence; it ſhould have been *the ſubject upon which I proceed.*

I muſt therefore deſire him to remember, that by the pleaſures of imagination, I mean only ſuch pleaſures as ariſe originally from ſight, and that I divide theſe pleaſures into two kinds.

This ſentence begins in a manner too ſimilar to the preceding. *I mean only ſuch pleaſures*—the adverb *only* is not in its proper place. It is not intended here to qualify the verb *mean*, but *ſuch pleaſures*; and ought therefore to be placed immediately after the latter.

My deſign being, firſt of all, to diſcourſe of thoſe primary pleaſures of the imagination, which entirely proceed from ſuch objects as are before our eyes; and, in the next place, to ſpeak of thoſe ſecondary pleaſures of the imagination, which flow from the ideas of viſible objects, when the objects are not actually before the eye, but are called up into our memories, or formed into agreeable viſions of things, that are either abſent or fictitious.

Neatneſs and brevity are peculiarly requiſite in the diviſion of a ſubject. This ſentence is ſomewhat clogged by a tedious phraſeology. *My deſign being firſt of all to diſcourſe—in the next place to ſpeak of—ſuch objects as are before our eyes—things that are either abſent or fictitious.*

Several words might have been omitted, and the ſtyle made more neat and compact.

The pleaſures of the imagination, taken in their full extent, are not ſo groſs as thoſe of ſenſe, nor ſo refined as thoſe of the underſtanding.

This ſentence is clear and elegant.

The laſt are indeed more preferable, becauſe they are founded on ſome new knowledge or improvement in the mind of man: Yet it muſt be confeſſed, that thoſe of the imagination are as great and as tranſporting as the other.

The phraſe, *more preferable*, is ſo palpable an inaccuracy, that we wonder how it could eſcape the obſervation of Mr. Addiſon. The propoſition, contained in the laſt member of this ſentence, is neither clearly, nor elegantly expreſſed. *It muſt be confeſſed, that thoſe of the imagination are as great, and as tranſporting as the other.* In the beginning of this ſentence he had called the pleaſures of the underſtanding *the laſt*; and he concludes with obſerving, that thoſe of the imagination are as great and tranſporting, as *the other*. Beſide that *the other* makes not a proper contraſt with *the laſt* it is left doubtful, whether by *the other* are meant the pleaſures of the underſtanding, or the pleaſures of ſenſe; though without doubt it was intended to refer to the pleaſures of the underſtanding only.

A beautiful proſpect delights the ſoul as much as a demonſtration; and a deſcription in Homer has charmed more readers than a chapter in Ariſtotle.

This is a good illuſtration of what he had been aſſerting, and is expreſſed with that elegance, by which Mr. Addiſon is diſtinguiſhed.

Beſides, the pleaſures of the imagination have this advantage above thoſe of the underſtanding, that they are more obvious, and more eaſy to be acquired.

This ſentence is unexceptionable.

It is but opening the eye, and the ſcene enters.

Though this is lively and pictureſque; yet we muſt remark a ſmall inaccuracy. A *ſcene* cannot be ſaid to *enter*; an *actor* enters; but a ſcene *appears*, or *preſents itſelf*.

The colours paint themſelves on the fancy, with very little attention of thought or application of mind in the beholder.

This is beautiful and elegant, and well ſuited to thoſe pleaſures of the imagination, of which the author is treating.

We are ſtruck, we know not how, with the ſymmetry of any thing we ſee; and immediately aſſent to the beauty of an object, without enquiring into the particular cauſes and occaſions of it.

We *aſſent* to the truth of a propoſition; but cannot with propriety be ſaid *to aſſent to the beauty of an object*. In the concluſion *particular* and *occaſions* are ſuperfluous words; and the pronoun *it* is in ſome meaſure ambiguous.

A man of a polite imagination is let into a great many pleaſures, that the vulgar are not capable of receiving.

The term *polite* is oftener applied to manners, than to the imagination. The uſe of *that* inſtead of *which* is too common with Mr. Addiſon. Except in caſes, where it is neceſſary to avoid repetition, *which* is preferable to *that*, and is undoubtedly ſo in the preſent inſtance.

He can converſe with a picture, and find an agreeable companion in a ſtatue. He meets with a ſecret refreſhment in a deſcription; and often feels a greater ſatisfaction in the proſpect of fields and meadows, than another does in the poſſeſſion. It gives him, indeed, a kind of property in every thing he ſees; and makes the moſt rude uncultivated parts of nature adminiſter to his pleaſures: So that he looks upon the world, as it were, in another light, and diſcovers in it a multitude of charms that conceal themſelves from the generality of mankind.

This ſentence is eaſy, flowing, and harmonious. We muſt however obſerve a ſlight inaccuracy. *It gives him a kind of property*—to this *it* there is no antecedent in the whole paragraph. To diſcover its connection, we

muſt look back to the third ſentence preceding, which begins with *a man of a polite imagination.* This phraſe, *polite imagination,* is the only antecedent, to which *it* can refer; and even this is not a proper antecedent, ſince it ſtands in the genitive caſe, as the qualification only of *a man.*

There are, indeed, but very few who know how to be idle and innocent, or have a reliſh of any pleaſures that are not criminal; every diverſion they take, is at the expence of ſome one virtue or another, and their very firſt ſtep out of buſineſs is into vice or folly.

This ſentence is truly elegant, muſical, and correct.

A man ſhould endeavour, therefore, to make the ſphere of his innocent pleaſures as wide as poſſible, that he may retire into them with ſafety, and find in them, ſuch a ſatisfaction as a wiſe man would not bluſh to take.

This alſo is a good ſentence, and expoſed to no objection.

Of this nature are thoſe of the imagination, which do not require ſuch a bent of thought as is neceſſary to our more ſerious employments; nor, at the ſame time, ſuffer the mind to ſink into that indolence and remiſſneſs, which are apt to accompany our more ſenſual delights; but, like a gentle exerciſe to the faculties, awaken them from ſloth and idleneſs, without putting them upon any labour or difficulty.

The beginning of this ſentence is incorrect. *Of this nature*, ſays he, *are thoſe of the imagination.* It might be aſked, of what nature? For the preceding ſentence had not deſcribed the nature of any claſs of pleaſures. He had ſaid that it was every mans duty to make the ſphere of his innocent pleaſures as extenſive, as poſſible, that within this ſphere he might find a ſafe retreat and laudable ſatisfaction. The tranſition therefore is looſely made. It would have been better, if he had ſaid, "This "advantage we gain," or "This ſatisfaction we enjoy," by means of the pleaſures of the imagination. The reſt of the ſentence is correct.

We might here add, that the pleaſures of the fancy are more conducive to health than thoſe of the underſtanding, which are worked out by dint of thinking, and attended with too violent a labour of the brain.

Worked out by dint of thinking is a phraſe, which borders too nearly on the ſtyle of common converſation, to be admitted into poliſhed compoſition.

Delightful ſcenes, whether in nature, painting, or poetry, have a kindly influence on the body, as well as the mind, and not only ſerve to clear and brighten the imagination, but are able to diſperſe grief and melancholy, and to ſet the animal ſpirits in pleaſing and agreeable motions. For this reaſon Sir Francis Bacon, in his Eſſay upon Health, has not thought it improper to preſcribe to his reader a poem or a proſpect,

where he particularly diſſuades him from knotty and ſubtile diſquiſitions, and adviſes him to purſue ſtudies that fill the mind with ſplendid and illuſtrious objects, as hiſtories, fables, and contemplations of nature.

In the latter of theſe two periods a member is out of its place. *Where he particularly diſſuades him from knotty and ſubtile diſquiſitions* ought to precede *has not thought it improper to preſcribe, &c.*

I have in this paper, by way of introduction, ſettled the notion of thoſe pleaſures of the imagination, which are the ſubject of my preſent undertaking, and endeavoured, by ſeveral conſiderations to recommend to my readers the purſuit of thoſe pleaſures; I ſhall in my next paper examine the ſeveral ſources from whence theſe pleaſures are derived.

Theſe two concluding ſentences furniſh examples of proper collocation of circumſtances. We formerly ſhowed that it is difficult ſo to diſpoſe them, as not to embarraſs the principal ſubject. Had the following incidental circumſtances, *by way of introduction—by ſeveral conſiderations—in this paper—in the next paper*, been placed in any other ſituation; the ſentence would have been neither ſo neat, nor ſo clear, as it is on the preſent conſtruction.

ELOQUENCE.

ORIGIN OF ELOQUENCE.

GRECIAN ELOQUENCE.

DEMOSTHENES.

ELOQUENCE is the art of perſuaſion. Its moſt eſſential requiſites are ſolid argument, clear method, and an appearance of ſincerity in the ſpeaker, with ſuch graces of ſtyle and utterance, as command attention. Good ſenſe muſt be its foundation. Without this no man can be truly eloquent; ſince fools can perſuade none, but fools. Before we can perſuade a man of ſenſe, we muſt convince him. Convincing and perſuading, though ſometimes confounded, are of very different import. Conviction affects the underſtanding only; perſuaſion the will and the practice. It is the buſineſs of a philoſopher to convince us of truth; it is that of an orator to perſuade us to act comformably to it by engaging our affections in its favor. Conviction is however one avenue to the heart; and it is that, which an orator muſt firſt attempt to gain; for no perſuaſion can be ſtable, which is not founded on conviction. But the orator muſt not be ſatisfied with convincing; he muſt addreſs himſelf to the paſſions; he muſt paint to the fancy, and touch the heart. Hence beſide ſolid argument and clear method all the conciliating and intereſting arts of compoſition and pronunciation enter into the idea of eloquence.

Eloquence may be conſidered, as conſiſting of three kinds or degrees. The firſt and loweſt is that, which aims only to pleaſe the hearers. Such in general is the eloquence of panegyrics, inaugural orations, addreſſes to great men, and other harangues of this kind. This ornamental ſort of compoſition may innocently amuſe and entertain the mind; and may be mixed at the ſame time with very uſeful ſentiments. But it muſt be acknowledged, that, where the ſpeaker aims only to ſhine and to pleaſe, there is great danger of art being ſtrained into oſtentation, and of the compoſition becoming tireſome and inſipid.

The ſecond degree of eloquence is, when the ſpeaker aims, not merely to pleaſe, but alſo to inform, to inſtruct, to convince; when his art is employed in removing prejudices againſt himſelf and his cauſe; in ſelecting the moſt proper arguments, ſtating them with the greateſt force, arranging them in the beſt order, expreſſing and delivering them with propriety and beauty; thereby diſpoſing us to paſs that judgment, or favor that ſide of the cauſe, to which he ſeeks to bring us. Within this degree chiefly is employed the eloquence of the bar.

The third and higheſt degree of eloquence is that, by which we are not only convinced, but intereſted, agitated, and carried along with the ſpeaker; our paſſions riſe with his; we ſhare all his emotions; we love, we

hate, we reſent, as he inſpires us; and are prompted to reſolve, or to act, with vigor and warmth. Debate in popular aſſemblies opens the moſt extenſive field to this ſpecies of eloquence; and the pulpit alſo admits it.

This high ſpecies of eloquence is always the offspring of paſſion. By paſſion we mean that ſtate of mind, in which it is agitated and fired by ſome object in view. Hence the univerſally acknowledged power of enthuſiaſm in public ſpeakers for affecting their audience. Hence all ſtudied declamation and labored ornaments of ſtyle, which ſhow the mind to be cool and unmoved, are inconſiſtent with perſuaſive eloquence. Hence every kind of affectation in geſture and pronunciation detracts ſo much from the weight of a ſpeaker. Hence the neceſſity of being, and of being believed to be, diſintereſted and in earneſt, in order to perſuade.

In tracing the origin of eloquence it is not neceſſary to go far back into the early ages of the world, or to ſearch for it among the monuments of Eaſtern or Egyptian antiquity. In thoſe ages, it is true, there was a certain kind of eloquence; but it was more nearly allied to poetry, than to what we properly call oratory. While the intercourſe of men was infrequent, and force was the principal mean employed in deciding controverſies; the arts of oratory and perſuaſion, of reaſoning and debate, could be little known. The firſt empires were of the deſpotic kind. A ſingle perſon, or at

moſt a few, held the reins of government. The multitude were accuſtomed to blind obedience; they were driven, not perſuaded. Conſequently none of thoſe refinements of ſociety, which make public ſpeaking an object of importance, were introduced.

Before the riſe of the Grecian Republics we perceive no remarkable appearances of eloquence, as the art of perſuaſion; and theſe gave it ſuch a field, as it never had before, and perhaps has never had again ſince that time. Greece was divided into many little ſtates. Theſe were governed at firſt by kings; who being for their tyranny ſucceſſively expelled from their dominions, there ſprung up a multitude of democratical governments, founded nearly upon the ſame plan, animated by the ſame high ſpirit of freedom, mutually jealous, and rivals of each other. Among theſe Athens was moſt noted for arts of every kind, but eſpecially for eloquence. We ſhall paſs over the orators, who flouriſhed in the early period of this Republic, and take a view of the great Demoſthenes, in whom eloquence ſhone with unrivaled ſplendor. Not formed by nature either to pleaſe or perſuade, he ſtruggled with, and ſurmounted, the moſt formidable impediments. He ſhut himſelf up in a cave, that he might ſtudy with leſs diſtraction. He declaimed by the ſea ſhore, that he might be uſed to the noiſe of a tumultuous aſſembly; and with pebbles in his mouth, that he might correct a defect in his ſpeech. He practiſed at

home with a naked ſword hanging over his ſhoulder, that he might check an ungraceful motion, to which he was ſubject. Hence the example of this great man affords the higheſt encouragement to every ſtudent of eloquence; ſince it ſhows how far art and application availed for acquiring an excellence, which nature appeared willing to deny.

No orator had ever a finer field, than Demoſthenes in his Olynthiacs and Philippics, which are his capital orations; and undoubtedly to the greatneſs of the ſubject, and to that integrity and public ſpirit, which breathe in them, they owe much of their merit. The object is to rouſe the indignation of his countrymen againſt Philip of Macedon, the public enemy of the liberties of Greece; and to guard them againſt the inſidious meaſures, by which that crafty prince endeavoured to lay them aſleep to danger. To attain this end, we ſee him uſing every proper mean, to animate a people, diſtinguiſhed by juſtice, humanity, and valor; but in many inſtances become corrupt and degenerate. He boldly accuſes them of venality, indolence, and indifference to the public cauſe; while at the ſame time he reminds them of the glory of their anceſtors, and of their preſent reſources. His cotemporary orators, who were bribed by Philip, and perſuaded the people to peace, he openly reproaches, as traitors to their country. He not only prompts to vigorous meaſures, but lays

down the plan of execution. His orations are ſtrongly animated, and full of the impetuoſity and fire of public ſpirit. His compoſition is not diſtinguiſhed by ornament and ſplendor. It is energy of thought, peculiarly his own, which forms his character, and ſets him above all others. He ſeems not to attend to words, but to things. We forget the orator, and think of the ſubject. He has no parade; no ſtudied introductions; but is like a man full of his ſubject, who after preparing his audience by a ſentence or two for hearing plain truths enters directly on buſineſs.

The ſtyle of Demoſthenes is ſtrong and conciſe; though ſometimes harſh and abrupt. His words are very expreſſive, and his arrangement firm and manly. Negligent of little graces, he aims at that ſublime, which lies in ſentiment. His action and pronunciation were uncommonly vehement and ardent. His character is of the auſtere rather, than of the gentle kind. He is always grave, ſerious, paſſionate; never degrading himſelf, nor attempting any thing like pleaſantry. If his admirable eloquence be in any reſpect faulty, it is in this, he ſometimes borders on the hard and dry. He may be thought to want ſmoothneſs and grace; which is attributed to his imitating too cloſely the manner of Thucydides, who was his great model for ſtyle, and whoſe hiſtory he tranſcribed eight times with his own hand. But theſe defects are more than compenſated by

that maſterly force of maſculine eloquence, which, as it overpowered all, who heard it, cannot in the preſent day be read without emotion.

ROMAN ELOQUENCE, CICERO, MODERN ELOQUENCE.

HAVING treated of eloquence among the Greeks, we now proceed to conſider its progreſs among the Romans; where we ſhall find one model at leaſt of eloquence in its moſt ſplendid form. The Romans derived their eloquence, poetry, and learning from the Greeks; and were far inferior to them in genius for all theſe accompliſhments. They had neither their vivacity, nor ſenſibility; their paſſions were not ſo eaſily moved, nor their conceptions ſo lively; in compariſon with them they were a phlegmatic people. Their language reſembled their character; it was regular, firm and ſtately; but wanted that expreſſive ſimplicity, that flexibility to ſuit every different ſpecies of compoſition, by which the Greek tongue is peculiarly diſtinguiſhed. Hence we always find in Greek productions more native genius; in Roman more regularity and art.

As the Roman government, during the Republic, was of the popular kind, public ſpeaking early became the mean of acquiring power and diſtinction. But in the unpoliſhed times of the ſtate their ſpeaking hardly de-

ſerved the name of eloquence. It was but a ſhort time before the age of Cicero, that the Roman orators roſe into any reputation. Craſſus and Antonius ſeem to have been the moſt eminent; but, as none of their works are extant, nor any of Hortenſius's, who was Cicero's rival at the bar; it is not neceſſary to tranſcribe, what Cicero ſaid of them, and of the character of their eloquence.

The object, moſt worthy of our attention, is Cicero himſelf; whoſe name alone ſuggeſts every thing ſplendid in oratory. With his life and character in other reſpects we are not at preſent concerned. We ſhall view him, only as an eloquent ſpeaker; and endeavor to mark both his virtues and defects. His virtues are eminently great. In all his orations art is conſpicuous. He begins commonly with a regular exordium, and with much addreſs prepoſſeſſes the hearers, and ſtudies to gain their affections. His method is clear, and his arguments arranged with great propriety. In clearneſs of method he has advantage over Demoſthenes. Every thing is in its proper place; he never attempts to move, before he has endeavored to convince; and in moving, particularly the ſofter paſſions, he is very ſucceſsful. No one ever knew the force of words better, than Cicero. He rolls them along with the greateſt beauty and pomp; and in the ſtructure of his ſentences is eminently curious and exact. He is always full and flowing;

never abrupt. He amplifies every thing; yet, though his manner is on the whole diffuse, it is often happily varied, and suited to the subject. When a great public object roused his mind, and demanded indignation and force; he departs considerably from that loose and declamatory manner, to which he at other times is addicted, and becomes very forcible and vehement.

This great orator however is not without defects. In most of his orations there is too much art. He seems often desirous of obtaining admiration rather, than of operating conviction. He is sometimes therefore showy rather, than solid; and diffuse, where he ought to be urgent. His periods are always round and sonorous; they cannot be accused of monotony, for they possess variety of cadence; but from too great fondness for magnificence he is sometimes deficient in strength. Though the services, which he performed for his country, were very considerable; yet he is too much his own panegyrist. Antient manners, which imposed fewer restraints on the side of decorum, may in some degree excuse, but cannot entirely justify his vanity.

Whether Demosthenes or Cicero were the most perfect orator is a question, on which critics are not agreed. Fenelon, the celebrated Archbishop of Cambray, and author of Telemachus, seems to have stated their merits with great justice and perspicuity. His judgment is given in his reflections on Rhetoric and Poetry. We

ſhall tranſlate the paſſage, though not, it is feared, without loſing much of the ſpirit of the original. "I do "not heſitate to declare," ſays he, "that I think De- "moſthenes ſuperior to Cicero. I am perſuaded, no "one can admire Cicero more, than I do. He adorns, "whatever he attempts. He does honor to language. "He diſpoſes of words in a manner peculiar to himſelf. "His ſtyle has great variety of character. Whenever "he pleaſes, he is even conciſe and vehement; for in- "ſtance, againſt Catiline, againſt Verres, againſt An- "thony. But ornament is too viſible in his writings. "His art is wonderful, but it is perceived. When the "orator is providing for the ſafety of the Republic, he "forgets not himſelf, nor permits others to forget him. "Demoſthenes ſeems to eſcape from himſelf, and to ſee "nothing, but his country. He ſeeks not elegance of "expreſſion; unſought he poſſeſſes it. He is ſuperior "to admiration. He makes uſe of language, as a "modeſt man does of dreſs, only to cover him. He "thunders, he lightens. He is a torrent, which carries "every thing before it. We cannot criticiſe, becauſe "we are not ourſelves. His ſubject enchains our atten- "tention, and makes us forget his language. We loſe "him from our ſight; Phillip alone occupies our "minds. I am delighted with both theſe orators; but "I confeſs that I am leſs affected by the infinite art and "magnificent eloquence of Cicero, than by the rapid "ſimplicity of Demoſthenes."

The reign of eloquence among the Romans was very ſhort. It expired with Cicero. Nor can we wonder at this; for liberty was no more, and the government of Rome was delivered over to a ſucceſſion of the moſt execrable tyrants, that ever diſgraced and ſcourged the human race.

In the decline of the Roman Empire the introduction of Chriſtianity gave riſe to a new kind of eloquence in the apologies, ſermons, and paſtoral writings of the fathers. But none of them afforded very juſt models of eloquence. Their language as ſoon, as we deſcend to the third or fourth century, becomes harſh; and they are generally infected with the taſte of that age, a love of ſwollen and ſtrained thoughts, and of the play of words.

As nothing in the middle ages deſerves attention, we paſs now to the ſtate of eloquence in modern times. Here it muſt be confeſſed, that in no European nation public ſpeaking has been valued ſo highly, or cultivated with ſo much care, as in Greece or Rome. The genius of the world appears in this reſpect to have undergone ſome alteration. The two countries, where we might expect to find moſt of the ſpirit of eloquence, are France and Great Britain; France on account of the diſtinguiſhed turn of its inhabitants toward all the liberal arts, and of the encouragement, which more than a century paſt theſe arts have received from the public; Great Britain on account of its free government, and

the liberal ſpirit and genius of its people. Yet in neither of theſe countries has oratory riſen nearly to the degree of its antient ſplendor.

Several reaſons may be given, why modern eloquence has been ſo confined and humble in its efforts. In the firſt place, it ſeems, that this change muſt in part be aſcribed to that accurate turn of thinking, which has been ſo much cultivated in modern times. Our public ſpeakers are obliged to be more reſerved, than the antients, in their attempts to elevate the imagination, and warm the paſſions; and by the influence of prevailing taſte their own genius is chaſtened perhaps in too great a degree. It is probable alſo, that we aſcribe to our correctneſs and good ſenſe, what is chiefly owing to the phlegm and natural coldneſs of our diſpoſition. For the vivacity and ſenſibility of the Greeks and Romans, eſpecially of the former, ſeem to have been much ſuperior to ours, and to have given them a higher reliſh for all the beauties of oratory.

Though the Parliament of Great Britain is the nobleſt field, which Europe at preſent affords to a public ſpeaker; yet eloquence has ever been there a more feeble inſtrument, than in the popular aſſemblies of Greece and Rome. Under ſome foreign reigns the iron hand of arbitrary power checked its efforts; and in later times miniſterial influence has generally rendered it of ſmall importance. At the bar our diſadvantage in

compariſon with the antients is great. Among them the judges were commonly numerous; the laws were few and ſimple; the deciſion of cauſes was left in a great meaſure to equity and the ſenſe of mankind. Hence the field for judicial eloquence was ample. But at preſent the ſyſtem of law is much more complicated. The knowledge of it is rendered ſo laborious, as to be the ſtudy of a mans life. Speaking is therefore only a ſecondary accompliſhment, for which he has little leiſure.

With reſpect to the pulpit it has been a great diſadvantage, that the practice of reading ſermons inſtead of repeating them has prevailed ſo univerſally in England. This indeed may have introduced accuracy; but eloquence has been much enfeebled. Another circumſtance too has been prejudicial. The ſectaries and fanatics before the Reſtoration uſed a warm, zealous, and popular manner of preaching; and their adherents afterward continued to diſtinguiſh themſelves by ſimilar ardor. Hatred of theſe ſects drove the eſtabliſhed church into the oppoſite extreme of a ſtudied coolneſs of expreſſion. Hence from the art of perſuaſion, which preaching ought ever to be, it has paſſed in England into mere reaſoning and inſtruction.

ELOQUENCE OF POPULAR ASSEMBLIES.

THE foundation of every ſpecies of eloquence is good ſenſe and ſolid thought. It ſhould be the firſt ſtudy of him, who means to addreſs a popular aſſembly, to be previouſly maſter of the buſineſs, on which he is to ſpeak; to be well-provided with matter and argument; and to reſt upon theſe the chief ſtreſs. This will give to his diſcourſe an air of manlineſs and ſtrength, which is a powerful inſtrument of perſuaſion. Ornament, if he have genius for it, will ſucceed of courſe; at any rate it deſerves only ſecondary regard.

To become a perſuaſive ſpeaker in a popular aſſembly, it is a capital rule, that a man ſhould always be perſuaded of whatever he recommends to others. Never, if it can be avoided, ſhould he eſpouſe that ſide of an argument, which he does not believe to be the right. All high eloquence muſt be the offspring of paſſion. This makes every man perſuaſive, and gives a force to his genius, which it cannot otherwiſe poſſeſs.

Debate in popular aſſemblies ſeldom allows a ſpeaker that previous preparation, which the pulpit always, and the bar ſometimes, admits. A general prejudice prevails, and not an unjuſt one, againſt ſet ſpeeches in public meetings. At the opening of a debate they may ſometimes be introduced with propriety; but, as the

debate advances, they become improper; they loſe the appearance of being ſuggeſted by the buſineſs, that is going on. Study and oſtentation are apt to be viſible; and conſequently, though admired as elegant, they are ſeldom ſo perſuaſive, as more free and unconſtrained diſcourſes.

This however does not forbid premeditation, on what we intend to ſpeak. With reſpect to the matter we cannot be too accurate in our preparation; but with regard to words and expreſſions it is very poſſible ſo far to overdo, as to render our ſpeech ſtiff and preciſe. Short notes of the ſubſtance of the diſcourſe are not only allowable, but of conſiderable ſervice, to thoſe eſpecially, who are beginning to ſpeak in public. They will teach them a degree of accuracy, which, if they ſpeak frequently, they are in danger of loſing. They will accuſtom them to diſtinct arrangement, without which eloquence, however great, cannot produce entire conviction.

Popular aſſemblies give ſcope for the moſt animated manner of public ſpeaking. Paſſion is eaſily excited in a great aſſembly, where the movements are communicated by mutual ſympathy between the orator and the audience. That ardor of ſpeech, that vehemence and glow of ſentiment, which proceed from a mind animated and inſpired by ſome great and public object, form the peculiar character of popular eloquence in its higheſt degree of perfection.

The warmth however, which we expreſs, muſt be always ſuited to the ſubject; ſince it would be ridiculous to introduce great vehemence into a ſubject of ſmall importance, or which by its nature requires to be treated with calmneſs. We muſt alſo be careful not to counterfeit warmth without feeling it. The beſt rule is, to follow nature; and never to attempt a ſtrain of eloquence, which is not prompted by our own genius. A ſpeaker may acquire reputation and influence by a calm, argumentative manner. To reach the pathetic and ſublime of oratory requires thoſe ſtrong ſenſibilities of mind and that high power of expreſſion, which are given to few.

Even when vehemence is juſtified by the ſubject, and prompted by genius; when warmth is felt, not feigned; we muſt be cautious, leſt impetuoſity tranſport us too far. If the ſpeaker loſe command of himſelf, he will ſoon loſe command of his audience. He muſt begin with moderation, and ſtudy to warm his hearers gradually and equally with himſelf. For, if their paſſions be not in uniſon with his, the diſcord will ſoon be felt. Reſpect for his audience ſhould always lay a decent reſtraint upon his warmth, and prevent it from carrying him beyond proper limits. When a ſpeaker is ſo far maſter of himſelf, as to preſerve cloſe attention to argument, and even to ſome degree of accurate expreſſion; this ſelf command, this effort of reaſon in the midſt of paſſion, contributes in the higheſt degree both

to pleaſe and to perſuade. The advantages of paſſion are afforded for the purpoſes of perſuaſion without that confuſion and diſorder, which are its uſual attendants.

In the moſt animated ſtrain of popular ſpeaking we muſt always regard, what the public ear will receive without diſguſt. Without attention to this imitation of antient orators might betray a ſpeaker into a boldneſs of manner, with which the coolneſs of modern taſte would be diſpleaſed. It is alſo neceſſary to attend with care to the decorums of time, place, and character. No ardor of eloquence can atone for neglect of theſe. No one ſhould attempt to ſpeak in public without forming to himſelf a juſt and ſtrict idea of what is ſuitable to his age and character; what is ſuitable to the ſubject, the hearers, the place, and the occaſion. On this idea he ſhould adjuſt the whole train and manner of his ſpeaking.

What degree of conciſeneſs or diffuſeneſs is ſuited to popular eloquence, it is not eaſy to determine with preciſion. A diffuſe manner is generally conſidered, as moſt proper. There is danger however of erring in this reſpect; by too diffuſe a ſtyle public ſpeakers often loſe more in point of ſtrength, than they gain by fulneſs of illuſtration. Exceſſive conciſeneſs indeed muſt be avoided. We muſt explain and inculcate; but confine ourſelves within certain limits. We ſhould never

forget that, however we may be pleaſed with hearing ourſelves ſpeak, every audience may be tired; and the moment, they grow weary, our eloquence becomes uſeleſs. It is better in general, to ſay too little, than too much; to place our thought in one ſtrong point of view, and reſt it there, than by ſhowing it in every light, and pouring forth a profuſion of words upon it, to exhauſt the attention of our hearers, and leave them languid and fatigued.

ELOQUENCE OF THE BAR.

THE ends of ſpeaking at the bar and in popular aſſemblies are commonly different. In the latter the orator aims principally to perſuade; to determine his hearers to ſome choice or conduct, as good, fit, or uſeful. He therefore applies himſelf to every principle of action in our nature; to the paſſions and to the heart as well, as to the underſtanding. But at the bar conviction is the principal object. There the ſpeaker's duty is not to perſuade the judges to what is good or uſeful, but to exhibit what is juſt and true; and conſequently his eloquence is chiefly addreſſed to the underſtanding.

At the bar ſpeakers addreſs themſelves to one, or to a few judges, who are generally perſons of age, gravity, and dignity of character. There thoſe advantages

which a mixed and numerous aſſembly affords for employing all the arts of ſpeech, are not enjoyed. Paſſion does not riſe ſo eaſily. The ſpeaker is heard with more coolneſs; he is watched with more ſeverity; and would expoſe himſelf to ridicule by attempting that high and vehement tone, which is ſuited only to a multitude. Beſide at the bar the field of ſpeaking is confined within law and ſtatute. Imagination is fettered. The advocate has always before him the line, the ſquare, and the compaſs. Theſe it is his chief buſineſs to be conſtantly applying to the ſubjects under debate.

Hence the eloquence of the bar is of a much more limited, more ſober, and chaſtiſed kind, than that of popular aſſemblies; and conſequently the judicial orations of the antients muſt not be conſidered, as exact models of that kind of ſpeaking, which is adapted to the preſent ſtate of the bar. With them ſtrict law was much leſs an object of attention, than it is with us. In the days of Demoſthenes and Cicero the municipal ſtatutes were few, ſimple, and general; and the deciſion of cauſes was left in a great meaſure to the equity and common ſenſe of the judges. Eloquence rather, than juriſprudence, was the ſtudy of pleaders. Cicero ſays that three months ſtudy would make a complete civilian; nay, it was thought that a man might be a good pleader without any previous ſtudy. Among the Romans there was a ſet of men, called *Pragmatici*, whoſe office it was to

ſupply the orator with all the law knowledge, his cauſe required; which he diſpoſed in that popular form, and decorated with thoſe colors of eloquence, which were moſt fitted for influencing the judges.

It may alſo be obſerved, that the civil and criminal judges in Greece and Rome were more numerous, than with us, and formed a kind of popular aſſembly. The celebrated tribunal of the Areopagus at Athens conſiſted of fifty judges at leaſt. In Rome the *Judices Selecti* were always numerous, and had the office and power of judge and jury. In the famous cauſe of Milo Cicero ſpoke to fifty one *Judices Selecti*, and thus had the advantage of addreſſing his whole pleading, not to one or a few learned judges of the point of law, as is the caſe with us, but to an aſſembly of Roman citizens. Hence thoſe arts of popular eloquence, which he employed with ſuch ſucceſs. Hence certain practices, which would be reckoned theatrical by us, were common at the Roman bar; ſuch, as introducing not only the accuſed perſon dreſſed in deep mourning, but preſenting to the judges his family and young children endeavouring to excite pity by their cries and tears.

The foundation of a lawyer's reputation and ſucceſs muſt be laid in a profound knowledge of his profeſſion If his abilities, as a ſpeaker, be ever ſo eminent; yet, if his knowledge of the law be ſuperficial, few will chooſe to engage him in their defence. Beſide previous ſtudy

and an ample ſtock of acquired knowledge another thing, inſeparable from the ſucceſs of every pleader, is a diligent and painful attention to every cauſe, with which he is intruſted; to all the facts and circumſtances, with which it is connected. Thus he will in a great meaſure be prepared for the arguments of his opponent; and, being previouſly acquainted with the weak parts of his own cauſe, he will be able to fortify them in the beſt manner againſt the attack of his adverſary.

Though the antient popular and vehement manner of pleading is now in a great meaſure ſuperſeded, we muſt not infer that there is no room for eloquence at the bar, and that the ſtudy of it is ſuperfluous. There is perhaps no ſcene of public ſpeaking, where eloquence is more requiſite. The dryneſs and ſubtilty of ſubjects, uſually agitated at the bar, require more, than any other, a certain kind of eloquence, in order to command attention; to give proper weight to the arguments employed; and to prevent, what the pleader advances, from paſſing unregarded. The effect of good ſpeaking is always great. There is as much difference in the impreſſion, made by a cold, dry, and confuſed ſpeaker, and that made by one, who pleads the ſame cauſe with elegance, order, and ſtrength; as there is between our conception of an object, when preſented in twilight, and when viewed in the effulgence of noon.

Purity and neatneſs of expreſſion is in this ſpecies of

eloquence chiefly to be ſtudied; a ſtyle perſpicuous and proper, not needleſsly overcharged with the pedantry of law terms, nor affectedly avoiding theſe, when ſuitable and requiſite. Verboſity is a fault, of which men of this profeſſion are frequently accuſed; into which the habit of ſpeaking and writing haſtily, and with little preparation, almoſt unavoidably betrays them. It cannot therefore be too earneſtly recommended to thoſe, who are beginning to practiſe at the bar, that they early guard againſt this, while they have leiſure for preparation. Let them form themſelves to the habit of a ſtrong and correct ſtyle; which will become natural to them afterward, when compelled by multiplicity of buſineſs to compoſe with precipitation. Whereas, if a looſe and negligent ſtyle have been ſuffered to become familiar; they will not be able even upon occaſions, when they wiſh to make an unuſual effort, to expreſs themſelves with force and elegance.

Diſtinctneſs in ſpeaking at the bar is a capital property. It ſhould be ſhown firſt in ſtating the queſtion; in exhibiting clearly the point in debate; what we admit; what we deny; and where the line of diviſion begins between us and the adverſe party. Next it ſhould appear in the order and arrangement of all the parts of the pleading. A clear method is of the higheſt conſequence in every ſpecies of oration; but in thoſe intricate caſes, which belong to the bar, it is infinitely eſſential.

Narration of facts ſhould always be as conciſe, as the nature of them will admit. They are always very neceſſary to be remembered; conſequently unneceſſary minuteneſs in relating them overloads the memory. Whereas, if a pleader omit all ſuperfluous circumſtances in his recital, he adds ſtrength to the material facts; gives a clearer view of what he relates, and makes the impreſſion of it more laſting. In argumentation however a more diffuſe manner ſeems requiſite at the bar, than on ſome other occaſions. For in popular aſſemblies, where the ſubject of debate is often a plain queſtion, arguments gain ſtrength by conciſeneſs. But the intricacy of law points frequently requires the arguments to be expanded, and placed in different lights, in order to be fully apprehended.

Candor in ſtating the arguments of his adverſary cannot be too much recommended to every pleader. If he diſguiſe them, or place them in a falſe light, the artifice will ſoon be diſcovered; and the judge and the hearers will conclude, that he either wants diſcernment to perceive, or fairneſs to admit the ſtrength of his opponent's reaſoning. But, if he ſtate with accuracy and candor the arguments uſed againſt him, before he endeavour to combat them, a ſtrong prejudice is created in his favor. He will appear to have entire confidence in his cauſe, ſince he does not attempt to ſupport it by artifice or concealment. The judge will

therefore be inclined to receive more readily the impreſſions, made upon him by a ſpeaker, who appears both fair and penetrating.

Wit may ſometimes be ſerviceable at the bar, particularly in a lively reply, by which ridicule is thrown on what an adverſary has advanced. But a young pleader ſhould never reſt his ſtrength on this dazzling talent. His office is not to excite laughter, but to produce conviction; nor perhaps did any one ever riſe to eminence in his profeſſion by being a witty lawyer.

Since an advocate perſonates his client, he muſt plead his cauſe with a proper degree of warmth. He muſt be cautious however of proſtituting his earneſtneſs and ſenſibility by an equal degree of ardor on every ſubject. There is a dignity of character, which it is highly important for every one of this profeſſion to ſupport. An opinion of probity and honor in a pleader is his moſt powerful inſtrument of perſuaſion. He ſhould always therefore decline embarking in cauſes, which are odious and manifeſtly unjuſt; and, when he ſupports a doubtful cauſe, he ſhould lay the chief ſtreſs upon thoſe arguments, which appear to him to be moſt forcible; reſerving his zeal and indignation for caſes, where injuſtice and iniquity are flagrant.

ELOQUENCE OF THE PULPIT.

HAVING treated of the eloquence of popular aſſemblies, and of that of the bar, we ſhall now conſider the ſtrain and ſpirit of that eloquence, which is ſuited to the pulpit. This field of public ſpeaking has ſeveral advantages peculiar to itſelf. The dignity and importance of its ſubjects muſt be allowed to be ſuperior to any other. They admit the higheſt embelliſhment in deſcription, and the greateſt warmth and vehemence of expreſſion. In treating his ſubject the preacher has alſo peculiar advantages. He ſpeaks not to one or a few judges, but to a large aſſembly. He is not afraid of interruption. He chooſes his ſubject at leiſure; and has all the aſſiſtance of the moſt accurate premeditation. The diſadvantages however, which attend the eloquence of the pulpit, are not inconſiderable. The preacher, it is true, has no contention with an adverſary; but debate awakens genius, and excites attention. His ſubjects, though noble, are trite and common. They are become ſo familiar to the public ear, that it requires no ordinary genius in the preacher to fix attention. Nothing is more difficult, than to beſtow on what is common the grace of novelty. Beſide the ſubject of the preacher uſually confines him to abſtract qualities, to virtues and vices; whereas that of other popular ſpeakers leads them to treat of perſons; which is generally more intereſting to the hearers, and occupies more powerfully

the imagination. We are taught by the preacher to deteſt only the crime; by the pleader to deteſt the criminal. Hence it happens that, though the number of moderately good preachers is great, ſo few have arrived at eminence. Perfection is very diſtant from modern preaching. The object however is truly noble, and worthy of being purſued with zeal.

To excel in preaching, it is neceſſary to have a fixed and habitual view of its object. This is to perſuade men to become good. Every ſermon ought therefore to be a perſuaſive oration. It is not to diſcuſs ſome abſtruſe point, that the preacher aſcends the pulpit. It is not to teach his hearers ſomething new, but to make them better; to give them at once clear views and perſuaſive impreſſions of religious truth.

The principal characteriſtics of pulpit eloquence, as diſtinguiſhed from the other kinds of public ſpeaking, appear to be theſe two, gravity and warmth. It is neither eaſy, nor common to unite theſe characters of eloquence. The grave, when it is predominant, becomes a dull, uniform ſolemnity. The warm, when it wants gravity, borders on the light and theatrical. A proper union of the two forms that character of preaching, which the French call *Onction*; that affecting, penetrating, and intereſting manner, which flows from a ſtrong ſenſe in the preacher of the importance of the truths, he delivers, and an earneſt deſire, that they may make full impreſſion on the hearts of his hearers.

A ſermon, as a particular ſpecies of compoſition, requires the ſtricteſt attention to unity. By this we mean that there ſhould be ſome main point, to which the whole tenor of the ſermon ſhall refer. It muſt not be a pile of different ſubjects heaped upon each other; but one object muſt predominate through the whole. Hence however it muſt not be underſtood, that there ſhould be no diviſions or ſeparate heads in a diſcourſe; nor that one ſingle thought only ſhould be exhibited in different points of view. Unity is not to be underſtood in ſo limited a ſenſe; it admits ſome variety; it requires only that union and connection be ſo far preſerved, as to make the whole concur in ſome one impreſſion on the mind. Thus, for inſtance, a preacher may employ ſeveral different arguments, to enforce the love of God; he may alſo inquire into the cauſes of the decay of this virtue; ſtill one great object is preſented to the mind. But, if becauſe his text ſays, "He, that loveth God, muſt love "his brother alſo," he ſhould therefore mix in the ſame diſcourſe arguments for the love of God and for the love of our neighbour; he would groſsly offend againſt unity, and leave a very confuſed impreſſion on the minds of his hearers.

Sermons are always more ſtriking, and generally more uſeful, the more preciſe and particular the ſubject of them is. Unity can never be ſo perfect in a general, as in a particular ſubject. General ſubjects indeed,

ſuch, as the excellency or the pleaſures of religion, are often choſen by young preachers, as the moſt ſhowy, and the eaſieſt to be handled; but theſe ſubjects produce not the high effects of preaching. Attention is much more commanded by taking ſome particular view of a great ſubject, and employing on that the whole force of argument and eloquence. To recommend ſome one virtue, or inveigh againſt a particular vice, affords a ſubject not deficient in unity or preciſion. But, if that virtue or vice be conſidered, as aſſuming a particular aſpect in certain characters, or certain ſituations in life; the ſubject becomes ſtill more intereſting. The execution is more difficult, but the merit and the effect are higher.

A preacher ſhould be cautious not to exhauſt his ſubject; ſince nothing is more oppoſite to perſuaſion, than unneceſſary and tedious fulneſs. There are always ſome things, which he may ſuppoſe to be known, and ſome, which require only brief attention. If he endeavour to omit nothing, which his ſubject ſuggeſts; he muſt unavoidably encumber it, and diminiſh its force.

To render his inſtructions intereſting to his hearers ſhould be the grand object of every preacher. He ſhould bring home to their hearts the truths, which he inculcates; and make each ſuppoſe himſelf particularly addreſſed. He ſhould avoid all intricate reaſonings; avoid expreſſing himſelf in general, ſpeculative propoſitions;

or laying down practical truths in an abſtract, metaphyſical manner. A diſcourſe ought to be carried on in the ſtrain of direct addreſs to the audience; not in the ſtrain of one writing an eſſay, but of one ſpeaking to a multitude, and ſtudying to connect, what is called application, or what immediately refers to practice, with the doctrinal parts of the ſermon.

It is always highly advantageous to keep in view the different ages, characters, and conditions of men, and to accommodate directions and exhortations to each of theſe different claſſes. Whenever you advance, what touches a mans character, or is applicable to his circumſtances, you are ſure of his attention. No ſtudy is more neceſſary for a preacher, than the ſtudy of human life, and of the human heart. To diſcover a man to himſelf in a light, in which he never ſaw his character before, produces a wonderful effect. Thoſe ſermons, though the moſt difficult in compoſition, are not only the moſt beautiful, but alſo the moſt uſeful, which are founded on the illuſtration of ſome peculiar character, or remarkable piece of hiſtory, in the ſacred writings; by purſuing which we may trace, and lay open, ſome of the moſt ſecret windings of the human heart. Other topics of preaching are become trite; but this is an extenſive field, which hitherto has been little explored, and poſſeſſes all the advantages of being curious, new, and highly uſeful. Biſhop Butler's ſermon on the *character of Balaam* is an example of this kind of preaching.

Faſhion, which operates ſo extenſively on human manners, has given to preaching at different times a change of character. This however is a torrent, which ſwells to day, and ſubſides to morrow. Sometimes poetical preaching is faſhionable; ſometimes philoſophical. At one time it muſt be all pathetic; at another all argumentative; as ſome celebrated preacher has ſet the example. Each of theſe modes is very defective; and he, who conforms himſelf to it, will both confine and corrupt his genius. Truth and good ſenſe are the ſole baſis, on which he can build with ſafety. Mode and humor are feeble and unſteady. No example ſhould be ſervilely imitated. From various examples the preacher may collect materials for improvement; but ſervility of imitation extinguiſhes all genius, or rather proves entire want of it.

CONDUCT OF A DISCOURSE IN ALL ITS PARTS. INTRODUCTION, DIVISION, NARRATION, AND EXPLICATION.

HAVING already conſidered, what is peculiar to each of the three great fields of public ſpeaking, popular aſſemblies, the bar, and the pulpit; we ſhall now treat of what is common to them all, and explain the conduct of a diſcourſe or oration in general.

The parts, which compoſe a regular oration, are theſe.

ſix; the exordium or introduction; the ſtate or the diviſion of the ſubject; narration or explication; the reaſoning or arguments; the pathetic part; and the concluſion. It is not neceſſary, that each of theſe enter into every public diſcourſe, nor that they always enter in this order. There are many excellent diſcourſes, in which ſome of theſe parts are omitted. But, as they are the conſtituent parts of a regular oration; and as in every diſcourſe ſome of them muſt occur; it is agreeable to our preſent purpoſe, to examine each of them diſtinctly.

The deſign of the introduction is to conciliate the good will of the hearers; to excite their attention; and to render them open to perſuaſion. When a ſpeaker is previouſly ſecure of the good will, attention, and docility of his audience; a formal introduction may be omitted. Reſpect for his hearers will in that caſe require only a ſhort exordium, to prepare them for the other parts of his diſcourſe.

The introduction is a part of a diſcourſe, which requires no ſmall care. It is always important to begin well; to make a favorable impreſſion at firſt ſetting out, when the minds of the hearers, as yet vacant and free, are more eaſily prejudiced in favor of the ſpeaker. We muſt add alſo, that a good introduction is frequently found to be extremely difficult. Few parts of a diſcourſe give more trouble to the compoſer, or require more delicacy in the execution.

An introduction ſhould be eaſy and natural. It ſhould always be ſuggeſted by the ſubject. The writer ſhould not plan it, before he has meditated in his own mind the ſubſtance of his diſcourſe. By taking the oppoſite courſe, and compoſing in the firſt place an introduction, the writer will often find that he is either led to lay hold of ſome commonplace topic, or that inſtead of the introduction being accommodated to the diſcourſe he is under the neceſſity of accommodating the diſcourſe to the introduction.

In this part of a diſcourſe correctneſs of expreſſion ſhould be carefully ſtudied. This is peculiarly requiſite on account of the ſituation of the hearers. At the beginning they are more diſpoſed to criticiſe, than at any other period; they are then occupied by the ſubject and the arguments; their attention is entirely directed to the ſpeaker's ſtyle and manner. Care therefore is requiſite, to prepoſſeſs them in his favor; though too much art muſt be cautiouſly avoided, ſince it will then be more eaſily detected, and will derogate from that perſuaſion, which the other parts of the diſcourſe are intended to produce.

Modeſty is alſo an indiſpenſable characteriſtic of a good introduction. If the ſpeaker begin with an air of arrogance and oſtentation, the ſelf love and pride of his hearers will be preſently awakened, and follow him with a very ſuſpicious eye through the reſt of his diſ-

courſe. His modeſty ſhould appear not only in his expreſſion, but in his whole manner; in his looks, in his geſtures, and in the tone of his voice. Every audience is pleaſed with thoſe marks of reſpect and awe, which are paid by the ſpeaker. The modeſty however of an introduction ſhould betray nothing mean or abject. Together with modeſty and deference to his hearers the orator ſhould ſhow a certain ſenſe of dignity, ariſing from perſuaſion of the juſtice or importance of his ſubject.

Particular caſes excepted, the orator ſhould not put forth all his ſtrength at the beginning; but it ſhould riſe and grow upon his hearers, as his diſcourſe advances. The introduction is ſeldom the place for vehemence and paſſion. The audience muſt be gradually prepared, before the ſpeaker venture on ſtrong and paſſionate ſentiments. Yet, when the ſubject is ſuch, that the very mention of it naturally awakens ſome paſſionate emotion; or when the unexpected preſence of ſome perſon or object in a popular aſſembly inflames the ſpeaker; either of theſe will juſtify an abrupt and vehement exordium. Thus the appearance of Catiline in the Senate renders the violent opening of Cicero's firſt oration againſt him very natural and proper. "Quo-"uſque tandem, Catalina, abutere patientiâ noſtrâ?" Biſhop Atterbury, preaching from this text, "Bleſſed "is he, whoſoever ſhall not be offended in me," ventures on this bold exordium; "And can any man then

er fails to ſtrike the hearers agreeably; and contributes alſo to make the diviſions more eaſily remembered.

Fifthly, Unneceſſary multiplication of heads ſhould be cautiouſly avoided. To divide a ſubject into many minute parts by endleſs diviſions and ſubdiviſions produces a bad effect in ſpeaking. In a logical treatiſe this may be proper; but it renders an oration hard and dry, and unneceſſarily fatigues the memory. A ſermon may admit from three to five or ſix heads, including ſubdiviſions; ſeldom are more allowable.

The next conſtituent part of a diſcourſe is narration or explication. Theſe two are joined together, becauſe they fall nearly under the ſame rules, and becauſe they generally anſwer the ſame purpoſe; ſerving to illuſtrate the cauſe, or the ſubject, of which one treats, before proceeding to argue on one ſide or the other; or attempting to intereſt the paſſions of the hearers.

To be clear and diſtinct, to be probable, and to be conciſe, are the qualities, which critics chiefly require in narration. Diſtinctneſs is requiſite to the whole of the diſcourſe, but belongs eſpecially to narration, which ought to throw light on all that follows. At the bar a fact, or a ſingle circumſtance, left in obſcurity, or miſunderſtood by the judge, may deſtroy the effect of all the argument and reaſoning, which the pleader employs. If his narration be improbable, it will be diſregarded; if it be tedious and diffuſe, it will fatigue and

be forgotten. To render narration diſtinct, particular attention is requiſite in aſcertaining clearly the names, dates, places, and every other important circumſtance of the facts recounted. In order to be probable in narration, it is neceſſary to exhibit the characters of the perſons, of whom we ſpeak, and to ſhow that their actions proceeded from ſuch motives, as are natural, and likely to gain belief. To be as conciſe, as the ſubject will admit, all ſuperfluous circumſtances muſt be rejected; by which the narration will be rendered more forcible and more clear.

In ſermons explication of the ſubject, to be diſcourſed on, occupies the place of narration at the bar, and is to be conducted in a ſimilar manner. It muſt be conciſe, clear, and diſtinct; in a ſtyle correct and elegant rather, than highly adorned. To explain the doctrine of the text with propriety; to give a full and clear account of the nature of that virtue or duty, which forms the ſubject of diſcourſe, is properly the didactic part of preaching; on the right execution of which much depends. In order to ſucceed, the preacher muſt meditate profoundly on the ſubject; ſo, as to place it in a clear and ſtriking point of view. He muſt conſider, what light it may derive from other paſſages of ſcripture; whether it be a ſubject nearly allied to ſome other, from which it ought to be diſtinguiſhed; whether it can be advantageouſly illuſtrated by comparing, or oppoſing it to ſome other thing; by ſearching into

cauſes, or tracing effects; by pointing out examples, or appealing to the hearts of the hearers; that thus a preciſe and circumſtantial view may be afforded of the doctrine inculcated. By diſtinct and apt illuſtrations of the known truths of religion a preacher may both diſplay great merit, as a compoſer; and, what is infinitely more valuable, render his diſcourſes weighty, inſtructive, and uſeful.

THE ARGUMENTATIVE PART OF A DISCOURSE, THE PATHETIC PART, AND THE PERORATION.

AS the great end, for which men ſpeak on any ſerious occaſion, is to convince their hearers, that ſomething is true, or right, or good; and thus to influence their practice; reaſon and argument muſt conſtitute the foundation of all manly and perſuaſive eloquence.

With regard to arguments three things are requiſite. Firſt, invention of them; ſecondly, proper diſpoſition and arrangement of them; and thirdly, expreſſing them in the moſt forcible manner. Invention is undoubtedly the moſt material, and the baſis of the reſt. But in this art can afford only ſmall aſſiſtance. It can aid a ſpeaker however in arranging and expreſſing thoſe arguments, which his knowledge of the ſubject has diſcovered.

Suppoſing the arguments properly choſen, we muſt avoid blending thoſe together, that are of a ſeparate nature. All arguments whatever are intended to prove one of theſe three things; that ſomething is true; that it is right or fit; or that it is profitable and good. Truth, duty, and intereſt are the three great ſubjects of diſcuſſion among men. But the arguments employed upon either of them are generally diſtinct; and he, who blends them all under one topic, which he calls his argument, as in ſermons is too frequently done, will render his reaſoning indiſtinct and inelegant.

With reſpect to the different degrees of ſtrength in arguments the common rule is to advance in the way of climax from the weakeſt to the moſt forcible. This method is recommended, when the ſpeaker is convinced, that his cauſe is clear, and eaſy to be proved. But this rule muſt not be univerſally obſerved. If he diſtruſt his cauſe, and have but one material argument, it is often proper to place this argument in the front; to prejudice his hearers early in his favor, and thus diſpoſe them to pay attention to the weaker reaſons, which he may afterward introduce. When amid a variety of arguments there is one or two more feeble, than the reſt, though proper to be uſed; Cicero adviſes to place them in the middle, as a ſituation leſs conſpicuous, than either the beginning or end of the train of reaſoning.

When arguments are ſtrong and ſatisfactory, the more they are ſeparated, the better. Each can then bear to be introduced alone, placed in its full light, amplified and contemplated. But, when they are of a doubtful or preſumptive nature, it is ſafer to crowd them together, to form them into a phalanx, that, though individually weak, they may mutually ſupport each other.

Arguments ſhould never be extended too far, nor multiplied too much. This ſerves rather to render a cauſe ſuſpicious, than to increaſe its ſtrength. A needleſs multiplicity of arguments burdens the memory, and diminiſhes the weight of that conviction, which a few well choſen arguments produce. To expand them alſo beyond the bounds of reaſonable illuſtration is always enfeebling. When a ſpeaker endeavours to expoſe a favorable argument in every light poſſible, fatigued by the effort, he loſes the ſpirit, with which he ſet out; and ends with feebleneſs, what he began with force.

Having attended thus far to the proper arrangement of arguments, we proceed to another eſſential part of a diſcourſe, the pathetic; in which, if any where, eloquence reigns, and exerts its power. On this head the following directions appear uſeful.

Conſider carefully, whether the ſubject admit the pathetic, and render it proper; and, if it do, what part

of the diſcourſe is moſt fit for it. To determine theſe points belongs to good ſenſe. Many ſubjects admit not the pathetic; and even in thoſe, that are ſuſceptible of it, an attempt to excite the paſſions in a wrong place, may expoſe an orator to ridicule. It may in general be obſerved, that, if we expect any emotion, which we raiſe, to have a laſting effect, we muſt ſecure in our favor the underſtanding and judgment. The hearers muſt be ſatisfied, that there are ſufficient grounds for their engaging in the cauſe with zeal and ardor. When argument and reaſoning have produced their full effect, the pathetic is admitted with the greateſt force and propriety.

A ſpeaker ſhould cautiouſly avoid giving his hearers warning, that he intends to excite their paſſions. Every thing of this kind chills their ſenſibility. There is alſo a great difference between telling the hearers that they ought to be moved, and actually moving them. To every emotion or paſſion nature has adapted certain correſponding objects; and without ſetting theſe before the mind it is impoſſible for an orator to excite that emotion. We are warmed with gratitude, we are touched with compaſſion, not when a ſpeaker ſhows us that theſe are noble diſpoſitions, and that it is our duty to feel them; nor when he exclaims againſt us for our indifference and coldneſs. Hitherto he has addreſſed only our reaſon or conſcience. He muſt deſcribe the kindneſs and tenderneſs of our friend;

he muſt exhibit the diſtreſs, ſuffered by the perſon, for whom he would intereſt us. Then, and not before, our hearts begin to be touched, our gratitude or compaſſion begins to flow. The baſis therefore of all ſucceſsful execution in pathetic oratory is to paint the object of that paſſion, which we deſire to raiſe, in the moſt natural and ſtriking manner; to deſcribe it with ſuch circumſtances, as are likely to awaken it in the minds of others.

To ſucceed in the pathetic, it is neceſſary to attend to the proper language of the paſſions. This, if we conſult nature, we ſhall ever find is unaffected and ſimple. It may be animated by bold and ſtrong figures, but it will have no ornament, nor finery. There is a great difference between painting to the imagination and to the heart. The one may be done with deliberation and coolneſs; the other muſt always be rapid, and ardent. In the former art and labor may be ſuffered to appear; in the latter no proper effect can be produced, unleſs it be the work of nature only. Hence all digreſſions ſhould be avoided, which may interrupt or turn aſide the ſwell of paſſion. Hence compariſons are always dangerous, and commonly quite improper in the midſt of the pathetic. It is alſo to be obſerved, that violent emotions cannot be laſting. The pathetic therefore ſhould not be prolonged too much. Due regard ſhould always be preſerved to what the hearers

will bear; for he, who attempts to carry them farther in paſſion, than they will follow him, fruſtrates his purpoſe. By endeavoring to warm them too much he takes the ſureſt method of freezing them completely.

Concerning the peroration or concluſion of a diſcourſe a few words will be ſufficient. Sometimes the whole pathetic part comes in moſt properly at the concluſion. Sometimes, when the diſcourſe has been altogether argumentative, it is proper to conclude with ſumming up the arguments, placing them in one view, and leaving the impreſſion of them full and ſtrong on the minds of the hearers. For the great rule of a concluſion, and what nature obviouſly ſuggeſts, is, place that laſt, on which you chooſe to reſt the ſtrength of your cauſe.

In every kind of public ſpeaking it is important to hit the preciſe time of concluding; to bring the diſcourſe juſt to a point; neither ending abruptly and unexpectedly, nor diſappointing the expectation of the hearers, when they look for the end of the diſcourſe. The ſpeaker ſhould always cloſe with dignity and ſpirit, that the minds of the hearers may be left warm, and that they may depart with a favorable impreſſion of the ſubject and of himſelf.

PRONUNCIATION OR DELIVERY.

THE great objects, to which every public ſpeaker ſhould direct his attention in forming his delivery, are, Firſt, to ſpeak ſo, as to be fully and eaſily underſtood by his hearers; and next, to expreſs himſelf with ſuch grace and energy, as to pleaſe and to move them.

To be fully and eaſily underſtood, the chief requiſites are a due degree of loudneſs of voice, diſtinctneſs, ſlowneſs, and propriety of pronunciation.

To be heard is undoubtedly the firſt requiſite. The ſpeaker muſt endeavor to fill with his voice the ſpace, occupied by the aſſembly. Though this power of voice is in a great meaſure a natural talent, it may receive conſiderable aſſiſtance from art. Much depends on the proper pitch and management of the voice. Every man has three pitches in his voice; the high, the middle, and the low. The high is uſed in calling aloud to ſome one at a diſtance; the low approaches to a whiſper; the middle is that, which is employed in common converſation, and which ſhould generally be uſed in public ſpeaking. For it is a great error, to ſuppoſe that the higheſt pitch of the voice is requiſite, to be well heard by a great aſſembly. This is confounding two things materially different, loudneſs or ſtrength of ſound with the key or note, on which we ſpeak. The voice may be rendered louder without altering the key; and

the ſpeaker will always be able to give moſt body, moſt perſevering force of ſound, to that pitch of voice, to which in converſation he is accuſtomed. Whereas, if he begin on the higheſt key, he will fatigue himſelf, and ſpeak with pain; and, wherever a man ſpeaks with pain to himſelf, he is always heard with pain by his audience. Give the voice therefore full ſtrength and ſwell of ſound; but always pitch it on your ordinary ſpeaking key; a greater quantity of voice ſhould never be uttered, than can be afforded without pain, and without any extraordinary effort. To be well heard, it is uſeful for a ſpeaker to fix his eye on ſome of the moſt diſtant perſons in the aſſembly, and to conſider himſelf, as ſpeaking to them. We naturally and mechanically utter our words with ſuch ſtrength, as to be heard by one, to whom we addreſs ourſelves, provided he be within the reach of our voice. This is the caſe in public ſpeaking as well, as in common converſation. But it muſt be remembered, that ſpeaking too loudly is peculiarly offenſive. The ear is wounded, when the voice comes upon it in rumbling, indiſtinct maſſes; beſide it appears, as if aſſent were demanded by mere vehemence and force of ſound.

To being well heard and clearly underſtood diſtinctneſs of articulation is more conducive perhaps, than mere loudneſs of ſound. The quantity of ſound, requiſite to fill even a large ſpace, is leſs, than is commonly ſuppoſed; with diſtinct articulation a man of a

weak voice will make it extend farther, than the ſtrongeſt voice can reach without it. This therefore demands peculiar attention. The ſpeaker muſt give every ſound its due proportion, and make every ſyllable, and even every letter, be heard diſtinctly. To ſucceed in this, rapidity of pronunciation muſt be avoided. A lifeleſs, drawling method however is not to be indulged. To pronounce with a proper degree of ſlowneſs and with full and clear articulation cannot be too induſtriouſly ſtudied, nor too earneſtly recommended. Such pronunciation gives weight and dignity to a diſcourſe. It aſſiſts the voice by the pauſes and reſts, which it allows it more eaſily to make; and it enables the ſpeaker to ſwell all his ſounds with more energy and more muſic. It aſſiſts him alſo in preſerving a due command of himſelf; whereas a rapid and hurried manner excites that flutter of ſpirits, which is the greateſt enemy to all right execution in oratory.

To propriety of pronunciation nothing is more conducive, than giving to every word, which we utter, that ſound, which the moſt polite uſage appropriates to it, in oppoſition to broad, vulgar, or provincial pronunciation. On this ſubject however written inſtructions avail nothing. But there is one obſervation, which it may be uſeful to make. In our language every word of more ſyllables, than one, has one accented ſyllable. The genius of the language requires the voice to mark that ſyllable by a ſtronger percuſſion, and to paſs more

slightly over the rest. The same accent should be given to every word in public speaking and in common discourse. Many persons err in this respect. When they speak in public and with solemnity, they pronounce differently from what they do at other times. They dwell upon syllables, and protract them; they multiply accents on the same word from a false idea, that it gives gravity and force to their discourse, and increases the pomp of public declamation. But this is one of the greatest faults, which can be committed in pronunciation; it constitutes, what is termed a theatrical or mouthing manner; and gives an artificial, affected air to speech, which detracts greatly from its agreeableness and its impression.

We shall now treat of those higher parts of delivery, by studying which a speaker endeavors not merely to render himself intelligible, but to give grace and force to what he utters. These may be comprehended under four heads, emphasis, pauses, tones, and gestures.

By emphasis is meant a fuller and stronger sound of voice, by which we distinguish the accented syllable of some word, on which we intend to lay particular stress, and to show how it affects the rest of the sentence. To acquire the proper management of emphasis, the only rule is, study to acquire a just conception of the force and spirit of those sentiments, which you are to deliver. In all prepared discourses it would be ex-

tremely uſeful, if they were read over or rehearſed in private, with a view of aſcertaining the proper emphaſis, before they were pronounced in public; marking at the ſame time the emphatical words in every ſentence, or at leaſt in the moſt important parts of the diſcourſe, and fixing them well in memory. A caution however muſt be given againſt multiplying emphatical words too much. They become ſtriking, only when uſed with prudent reſerve. If they recur too frequently; if a ſpeaker attempt to render every thing, which he ſays, of high importance by a multitude of ſtrong emphaſes; they will ſoon fail to excite the attention of his hearers.

Next to emphaſis pauſes demand attention. They are of two kinds; firſt, emphatical pauſes; and ſecondly, ſuch, as mark the diſtinctions of ſenſe. An emphatical pauſe is made, after ſomething has been ſaid of peculiar moment, on which we wiſh to fix the hearer's attention. Sometimes a matter of importance is preceded by a pauſe of this nature. Such pauſes have the ſame effect with ſtrong emphaſes, and are ſubject to the ſame rules; eſpecially to the caution, juſt now given, of not repeating them too frequently. For, as they excite uncommon attention, and conſequently raiſe expectation, if this be not fully anſwered, they occaſion diſappointment and diſguſt.

But the moſt frequent and the principal uſe of pauſes

is, to mark the diviſions of the ſenſe, and at the ſame time to permit the ſpeaker to draw his breath; and the proper management of ſuch pauſes is one of the moſt nice and difficult articles in delivery. A proper command of the breath is peculiarly requiſite. To obtain this, every ſpeaker ſhould be very careful to provide a full ſupply of breath for what he is to utter. It is a great miſtake, to ſuppoſe that the breath muſt be drawn only at the end of a period, when the voice is allowed to fall. It may eaſily be gathered at the intervals of a period, when the voice ſuffers only a momentary ſuſpenſion. By this management a ſufficient ſupply may be obtained for carrying on the longeſt period without improper interruptions.

Pauſes in public diſcourſe muſt be formed upon the manner, in which we expreſs ourſelves in ſenſible converſation, and not upon the ſtiff, artificial manner, which we acquire from peruſing books according to common punctuation. Punctuation in general is very arbitrary; often capricious and falſe; dictating a uniformity of tone in the pauſes, which is extremely unpleaſing. For it muſt be obſerved, that, to render pauſes graceful and expreſſive, they muſt not only be made in the right places, but alſo be accompanied by proper tones of voice; by which the nature of theſe pauſes is intimated much more, than by their length, which can never be exactly meaſured. Sometimes on-

ly a ſlight and ſimple ſuſpenſion of the voice is proper; ſometimes a degree of cadence is requiſite; and ſometimes that peculiar tone and cadence, which mark the concluſion of a period. In all theſe caſes a ſpeaker is to regulate himſelf by the manner, in which he ſpeaks, when engaged in earneſt diſcourſe with others.

In reading or reciting verſe there is a peculiar difficulty in making the pauſes with propriety. There are two kinds of pauſes, which belong to the muſic of verſe; one at the end of a line, and the other in the middle of it. Rhyme always renders the former ſenſible, and compels obſervance of it in pronunciation. In blank verſe it is leſs perceivable; and, when there is no ſuſpenſion of the ſenſe, it has been doubted, whether in reading ſuch verſe any regard ſhould be paid to the cloſe of a line? On the ſtage indeed, where the appearance of ſpeaking in verſe ſhould be avoided, the cloſe of ſuch lines, as make no pauſe in the ſenſe, ſhould not be rendered perceptible to the ear. On other occaſions we ought for the ſake of melody to read blank verſe in ſuch manner, as to make each line ſenſible to the ear. In attempting this however every appearance of ſingſong and tone muſt be cautiouſly avoided. The cloſe of a line, where there is no pauſe in the meaning, ſhould be marked only by ſo ſlight a ſuſpenſion of ſound, as may diſtinguiſh the paſſage from one line to another without injuring the ſenſe.

The pauſe in the middle of the line falls after the 4th, 5th, 6th, or 7th ſyllable, and no other. When this pauſe coincides with the ſlighteſt diviſion in the ſenſe, the line may be read with eaſe; as in the two firſt verſes of Pope's Meſſiah;

Ye nymphs of Solyma, begin the ſong,
To heavenly themes ſublimer ſtrains belong.

But, if words, that have ſo intimate a connexion, as not to admit even a momentary ſeparation, be divided from each other by this cæſural pauſe; we then perceive a conflict between the ſenſe and ſound, which renders it difficult to read ſuch lines gracefully. In ſuch caſes it is beſt to ſacrifice ſound to ſenſe. For inſtance, in the following line of Milton;

——————— What in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raiſe and ſupport.

The ſenſe clearly dictates the pauſe after "illumine," which ought to be obſerved; though, if melody only were to be regarded, "illumine" ſhould be connected with what follows, and no pauſe made before the 4th or 6th ſyllable. So alſo in the following line of Pope's Epiſtle to Arbuthnot;

I ſit; with ſad civility I read.

The ear points out the pauſe, as falling after "ſad," the fourth ſyllable. But to ſeparate "ſad" and "civility" would be very bad reading. The ſenſe allows no

other pauſe, than after the ſecond ſyllable, "ſit;" which therefore is the only one to be obſerved.

We proceed to treat of tones in pronunciation, which are different both from emphaſes and pauſes; conſiſting in the modulation of the voice, the notes or variations of ſound, which are employed in public ſpeaking. The moſt material inſtruction, which can be given on this ſubject, is to form the tones of public ſpeaking upon the tones of animated converſation. Every one, who is engaged in ſpeaking on a ſubject, which intereſts him nearly, has an eloquent or perſuaſive tone and manner. But, when a ſpeaker departs from his natural tone of expreſſion, he becomes frigid and unperſuaſive. Nothing is more abſurd, than to ſuppoſe that as ſoon, as a ſpeaker aſcends a pulpit, or riſes in a public aſſembly, he is inſtantly to lay aſide the voice, with which he expreſſes himſelf in private, and to aſſume a new, ſtudied tone, and a cadence altogether different from his natural manner. This has vitiated all delivery, and has given riſe to cant and tedious monotony. Let every public ſpeaker guard againſt this error. Whether he ſpeak in private, or in a great aſſembly; let him remember that he ſtill ſpeaks. Let him take nature for his guide, and ſhe will teach him to expreſs his ſentiments and feelings in ſuch manner, as to make the moſt forcible and pleaſing impreſſion upon the minds of his hearers.

It now remains to treat of geſture, or what is called

action, in public diſcourſe. The beſt rule is, attend to the looks and geſture, in which earneſtneſs, indignation, compaſſion, or any other emotion, diſcovers itſelf to moſt advantage in the common intercourſe of men; and let theſe be your model. A public ſpeaker muſt however adopt that manner, which is moſt natural to himſelf. His motions and geſtures ought all to exhibit that kind of expreſſion, which nature has dictated to him; and, unleſs this be the caſe, no ſtudy can prevent their appearing ſtiff and forced. But, though nature is the baſis, on which every grace of geſture muſt be founded; yet there is room for ſome improvements of art. The ſtudy of action conſiſts chiefly in guarding againſt awkward and diſagreeable motions, and in learning to perform ſuch, as are natural to the ſpeaker, in the moſt graceful manner. Numerous are the rules, which writers have laid down for the attainment of a proper geſticulation. But written inſtructions on this ſubject can be of little ſervice. To become uſeful, they muſt be exemplified. A few of the ſimpleſt precepts however may be obſerved with advantage. Every ſpeaker ſhould ſtudy to preſerve as much dignity, as poſſible, in the attitude of his body. He ſhould generally prefer an erect poſture; his poſition ſhould be firm, that he may have the fulleſt and freeſt command of all his motions. If any inclination be uſed, it ſhould be toward the hearers, which is a natural expreſſion of earneſtneſs. The countenance ſhould correſpond with the nature of the diſcourſe; and, when no

particular emotion is expreſſed, a ſerious and manly look is always to be preferred. The eyes ſhould never be fixed entirely on any one object, but move eaſily round the audience. In motion, made with the hands, conſiſts the principal part of geſture in ſpeaking. It is natural for the right hand to be employed more frequently, than the left. Warm emotions require the exerciſe of them both together. But, whether a ſpeaker geſticulate with one, or with both his hands, it is important, that all his motions be eaſy and unreſtrained. Narrow and confined movements are uſually ungraceful; and conſequently motions, made with the hands, ſhould proceed from the ſhoulder rather, than from the elbow. Perpendicular movements are to be avoided. Oblique motions are moſt pleaſing and graceful. Sudden and rapid motions are ſeldom good. Earneſtneſs can be fully expreſſed without their aſſiſtance.

We cannot conclude this ſubject without earneſtly admoniſhing every ſpeaker to guard againſt affectation, which is the deſtruction of good delivery. Let his manner, whatever it be, be his own; neither imitated from another, nor taken from ſome imaginary model, which is unnatural to him. Whatever is native, though attended by ſeveral defects, is likely to pleaſe; becauſe it ſhows us the man; and becauſe it has the appearance of proceeding from the heart. To attain a delivery extremely correct and graceful is, what few can expect; ſince ſo many natural talents muſt concur in.

its formation. But to acquire a forcible and perſuaſive manner is within the power of moſt perſons. They need only to diſmiſs bad habits; follow nature; and ſpeak in public, as they do in private, when they ſpeak in earneſt and from the heart.

MEANS OF IMPROVING IN ELOQUENCE.

TO thoſe, who are anxious to excel in any of the higher kinds of oratory, nothing is more neceſſary, than to cultivate habits of the ſeveral virtues, and to refine and improve their moral feelings. A true orator muſt poſſeſs generous ſentiments, warm feelings, and a mind turned toward admiration of thoſe great and high objects, which men are by nature formed to venerate. Connected with the manly virtues, he ſhould poſſeſs ſtrong and tender ſenſibility to all the injuries, diſtreſſes, and ſorrows of his fellow creatures.

Next to moral qualifications, what is moſt requiſite for an orator, is a fund of knowledge. There is no art, by which eloquence can be taught in any ſphere, without a ſufficient acquaintance with what belongs to that ſphere. Attention to the ornaments of ſtyle can only aſſiſt an orator in ſetting off to advantage the ſtock of materials, which he poſſeſſes; but the materials themſelves muſt be derived from other ſources, than from rhetoric. A pleader muſt make himſelf completely ac-

quainted with the law; he must possess all that learning and experience, which can be useful for supporting a cause, or convincing a judge. A preacher must apply himself closely to the study of divinity, of practical religion, of morals, and of human nature; that he may be rich in all topics of instruction and persuasion. He, who wishes to excel in the supreme council of the nation, or in any public assembly, should be thoroughly acquainted with the business, that belongs to such assembly; and should attend with accuracy to all the facts, which may be the subject of question or deliberation.

Beside the knowledge, peculiar to his profession, a public speaker should be acquainted with the general circle of polite literature. Poetry he will find useful for embellishing his style, for suggesting lively images, or pleasing illusions. History may be still more advantageous; as the knowledge of facts, of eminent characters, and of the course of human affairs, finds place on many occasions. Deficiency of knowledge even in subjects, not immediately connected with his profession, will expose a public speaker to many disadvantages, and give his rivals, who are better qualified, a decided superiority.

To every one, who wishes to excel in eloquence, application and industry cannot be too much recommended. Without this it is impossible to excel in any thing. No one ever became a distinguished pleader, or preach-

or, or ſpeaker in any aſſembly, without previous labor and application. Induſtry indeed is not only neceſſary to every valuable acquiſition; but it is deſigned by Providence, as the ſeaſoning of every pleaſure, without which life is doomed to languiſh. No enemy is ſo deſtructive both to honorable attainments, and to the real and ſpirited enjoyment of life, as that relaxed ſtate of mind, which proceeds from indolence and diſſipation. He, who is deſtined to excel in any art, will be diſtinguiſhed by enthuſiaſm for that art; which, firing his mind with the object in view, will diſpoſe him to reliſh every neceſſary labor. This was the characteriſtic of the great men of antiquity; and this muſt diſtinguiſh moderns, who wiſh to imitate them. This honorable enthuſiaſm ſhould be cultivated by ſtudents in oratory. If it be wanting to youth, manhood will flag exceedingly.

Attention to the beſt models contributes greatly to improvement in the arts of ſpeaking and writing. Every one indeed ſhould endeavor to have ſomething, that is his own, that is peculiar to himſelf, and will diſtinguiſh his ſtyle. Genius is certainly depreſſed, or want of it betrayed, by ſlaviſh imitation. Yet no genius is ſo original, as not to receive improvement from proper examples in ſtyle, compoſition, and delivery. They always afford ſome new ideas, and ſerve to enlarge and correct our own. They quicken the current of thought, and excite emulation.

In imitating the ſtyle of a favorite author a material diſtinction ſhould be obſerved between written and ſpoken language. Theſe are in reality two different modes of communicating ideas. In books we expect correctneſs, preciſion, all redundancies pruned, all repetitions avoided, language completely poliſhed. Speaking allows a more eaſy, copious ſtyle, and leſs confined by rule; repetitions may often be requiſite; parentheſes may ſometimes be ornamental; the ſame thought muſt often be placed in different points of view; ſince the hearers can catch it only from the mouth of the ſpeaker, and have not the opportunity, as in reading, of turning back again, and of contemplating, what they do not entirely comprehend. Hence the ſtyle of many good authors would appear ſtiff, affected, and even obſcure, if transferred into a popular oration. How unnatural, for inſtance, would Lord Shaftſbury's ſentences ſound in the mouth of a public ſpeaker? Some kinds of public diſcourſe indeed, ſuch, as that of the pulpit, where more accurate preparation and more ſtudied ſtyle are allowable, would admit ſuch a manner better, than others, which are expected to approach nearer to extemporaneous ſpeaking. But ſtill there is generally ſuch a difference between a compoſition, intended only to be read, and one proper to be ſpoken, as ſhould caution us againſt a cloſe and improper imitation.

The compoſition of ſome authors approaches nearer to the ſtyle of ſpeaking, than that of others; and they

may therefore be imitated with more ſafety. In our own language Swift and Bolingbroke are of this deſcription. The former, though correct, preſerves the eaſy and natural manner of an unaffected ſpeaker. The ſtyle of the latter is more ſplendid; but ſtill it is the ſtyle of ſpeaking, or rather of declamation.

Frequent exerciſe both in compoſing and ſpeaking is a neceſſary mean of improvement. That kind of compoſition is moſt uſeful, which is connected with the profeſſion, or ſort of public ſpeaking, to which perſons devote themſelves. This they ſhould ever keep in view, and gradually inure themſelves to it. At the ſame time they ſhould be cautious not to allow themſelves to compoſe negligently on any occaſion. He, who wiſhes to write or ſpeak correctly, ſhould in the moſt trivial kind of compoſition, in writing a letter, or even in common converſation, ſtudy to expreſs himſelf with propriety. By this we do not mean that he is never to write or ſpeak, but in elaborate and artificial language. This would introduce ſtiffneſs and affectation, infinitely worſe, than the greateſt negligence. But we muſt obſerve, that there is in every thing a proper and becoming manner; and on the contrary there is alſo an awkward performance of the ſame thing. The becoming manner is often the moſt light, and ſeemingly moſt careleſs; but taſte and attention are requiſite to ſeize the juſt idea of it. That idea, when acquired, ſhould be kept in view, and upon it ſhould be formed, whatever we write or ſpeak.

Exercises in speaking have always been recommended to students; and, when under proper regulation, must be of great use. Those public and promiscuous societies, in which numbers are brought together, who are frequently of low stations and occupations; who are connected by no common bond of union, except a ridiculous rage for public speaking, and have no other object in view, than to exhibit their supposed talents; are institutions not only useless, but injurious. They are calculated to become seminaries of licentiousness, petulance, and faction. Even the allowable meetings, into which students of oratory may form themselves, need direction, in order to render them useful. If their subjects of discourse be improperly chosen; if they support extravagant or indecent topics; if they indulge themselves in loose and flimsy declamation; or accustom themselves without preparation to speak pertly on all subjects; they will unavoidably acquire a very faulty and vicious taste in speaking. It should therefore be recommended to all those, who are members of such societies, to attend to the choice of their subjects; to take care, that they be useful and manly, either connected with the course of their studies, or related to morals and taste, to action and life. They should also be temperate in the practice of speaking; not speak too often, nor on subjects, of which they are ignorant; but only when they have proper materials for a discourse, and have previously considered and digested the subject. In speaking they should be cautious always to

keep good ſenſe and perſuaſion in view rather, than a ſhow of eloquence. By theſe means they will gradually form themſelves to a manly, correct, and perſuaſive manner of ſpeaking.

It may now be aſked, of what uſe will the ſtudy of critical and rhetorical writers be to thoſe, who wiſh to excel in eloquence? They certainly ought not to be neglected; and yet perhaps very much cannot be expected from them. It is however from the original antient writers, that the greateſt advantage may be derived; and it is a diſgrace to any one, whoſe profeſſion calls him to ſpeak in public, to be unacquainted with them. In all the antient rhetorical writers there is indeed one defect; they are too ſyſtematical. They aim at doing too much; at reducing rhetoric to a perfect art, which may even ſupply invention with materials on every ſubject; ſo that one would ſuppoſe they expected to form an orator by rule, as they would form a carpenter. But in reality all, that can be done, is to aſſiſt and enlighten taſte, and to point out to genius the courſe, it ought to hold.

Ariſtotle was the firſt, who took rhetoric out of the hands of the ſophiſts, and founded it on reaſon and ſolid ſenſe. Some of the profoundeſt obſervations, which have been made on the paſſions and manners of men, are to be found in his Treatiſe on Rhetoric; though in this, as in all his writings, his great conciſeneſs often renders him obſcure. The Greek rhetoricians, who

ſucceeded him, moſt of whom are now loſt, improved on his foundation. Two of them ſtill remain, Demetrius Phalereus, and Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus. Both wrote on the conſtruction of ſentences, and deſerve to be conſulted; particularly Dionyſius, who is a very accurate and judicious critic.

To recommend the rhetorical writings of Cicero is ſuperfluous. Whatever on the ſubject of eloquence is ſuggeſted by ſo great an orator, muſt be worthy of attention. His moſt extenſive work on this ſubject is that *De Oratore*. None of his writings are more highly finiſhed, than this treatiſe. The dialogue is polite; the characters are well ſupported, and the management of the whole is beautiful and pleaſing. The *Orator ad M. Brutum* is alſo a valuable treatiſe; and indeed through all Cicero's rhetorical works are diſplayed thoſe ſublime ideas of eloquence, which are calculated to form a juſt taſte, and to inſpire that enthuſiaſm for the art, which is highly conducive to excellence.

But of all antient writers on the ſubject of oratory the moſt inſtructive and moſt uſeful is Quintilian. His inſtitutions abound with good ſenſe, and diſcover a taſte in the higheſt degree juſt and accurate. Almoſt all the principles of good criticiſm are found in them. He has well digeſted the antient ideas concerning rhetoric, and has delivered his inſtructions in elegant and poliſhed language.

COMPARATIVE MERIT OF THE ANTIENTS AND MODERNS.

A VERY curious queſtion has been agitated with regard to the comparative merit of the antients and moderns. In France this diſpute was carried on with great heat between Boileau and Madame Dacier for the antients, and Perrault and La Motte for the moderns. Even at this day men of letters are divided on the ſubject. A few reflections upon it may be uſeful.

To decry the antient claſſics is a vain attempt. Their reputation is eſtabliſhed upon too ſolid a foundation to be ſhaken. Imperfections may be traced in their writings; but to diſcredit their works in general can belong only to peeviſhneſs or prejudice. The approbation of the public through ſo many centuries eſtabliſhes a verdict in their favor, from which there is no appeal.

In matters of mere reaſoning the world may be long in error; and ſyſtems of philoſophy often have a currency for a time, and then die. But in objects of taſte there is no ſuch fallibility; as they depend not on knowledge and ſcience, but upon ſentiment and feeling. Now the univerſal feeling of mankind muſt be right; Homer and Virgil therefore muſt continue to ſtand upon the ſame ground, which they have ſo long occupied.

Let us guard however againſt blind veneration for the antients; and inſtitute a fair compariſon between them and the moderns. If the antients had the pre-eminence in genius; yet the moderns muſt have ſome advantage in all arts, which are improved by the natural progreſs of knowledge.

Hence in natural philoſophy, aſtronomy, chemiſtry, and other ſciences, which reſt upon obſervation of facts, the moderns have a decided ſuperiority over the antients. Perhaps too in preciſe reaſoning philoſophers of modern ages are ſuperior to thoſe of antient times; as a more extenſive literary intercourſe has contributed to ſharpen the faculties of men. The moderns have alſo the ſuperiority in hiſtory and in political knowledge; owing to the extenſion of commerce, the diſcovery of different countries, the ſuperior facility of intercourſe, and the multiplicity of events and revolutions, which have taken place in the world. In poetry likewiſe ſome advantages have been gained in point of regularity and accuracy. In dramatic performances improvements have certainly been made upon the antient models. The variety of characters is greater; greater ſkill has been diſplayed in the conduct of the plot; and a happier attention to probability and decorum. Among the antients we find higher conceptions, greater ſimplicity, and more original fancy. Among the moderns there is more of art and correctneſs, but leſs genius. But, though this remark may in general be juſt, there

are ſome exceptions from it; Milton and Shakeſpeare are inferior to no poets in any age.

Among the antients were many circumſtances, favorable to the exertions of genius. They travelled much in ſearch of learning, and converſed with prieſts, poets, and philoſophers They returned home, full of diſcoveries, and fired by uncommon objects. Their enthuſiaſm was greater; and, few being ſtimulated to excel, as authors, their fame was more intenſe and flattering. In modern times good writing is leſs prized. We write with leſs effort. Printing has ſo multiplied books, that aſſiſtance is eaſily procured. Hence mediocrity of genius prevails. To riſe beyond this, and to ſoar above the crowd, is given to few.

In epic poetry Homer and Virgil are ſtill unrivalled; and orators, equal to Demoſthenes and Cicero, we have none. In hiſtory we have no modern narration, ſo elegant, ſo pictureſque, ſo animated, and intereſting, as thoſe of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Livy, Tacitus, and Salluſt. Our dramas with all their improvements are inferior in poetry and ſentiment to thoſe of Sophocles and Euripides. We have no comic dialogue, that equals the correct, graceful, and elegant ſimplicity of Terence. The elegies of Tibullus, the paſtorals of Theocritus, and the lyric poetry of Horace, are ſtill unrivalled. By thoſe therefore, who wiſh to form their taſte, and nouriſh their genius, the utmoſt attention muſt be paid to the antient claſſics, both Greek and Roman.

After theſe reflections on the antients and moderns we proceed to a critical examination of the moſt diſtinguiſhed kinds of compoſition, and of the characters of thoſe writers, whether antient or modern, who have excelled in them. Of orations and public diſcourſes much has already been ſaid. The remaining proſe compoſitions may be divided into hiſtorical writing, philoſophical writing, epiſtolary writing, and fictitious hiſtory.

HISTORICAL WRITING.

HISTORY is a record of truth for the inſtruction of mankind. Hence the great requiſites in a hiſtorian are impartiality, fidelity, and accuracy.

In the conduct of hiſtorical detail the firſt object of a hiſtorian ſhould be, to give his work all poſſible unity. Hiſtory ſhould not conſiſt of unconnected parts. Its portions ſhould be united by ſome connecting principle, which will produce in the mind an impreſſion of ſomething, that is one, whole, and entire. Polybius, though not an elegant writer, is remarkable for this quality.

A hiſtorian ſhould trace actions and events to their ſources. He ſhould therefore be well acquainted with human nature and politics. His ſkill in the former

will enable him to deſcribe the characters of individuals; and his knowledge of the latter to account for the revolutions of government, and the operation of political cauſes on public affairs. With regard to political knowledge the antients wanted ſome advantages, which are enjoyed by the moderns. In antient times there was leſs communication among neighboring ſtates; no intercourſe by eſtabliſhed poſts, nor by ambaſſadors at diſtant courts. Larger experience too of the different modes of government has improved the modern hiſtorian beyond the hiſtorian of antiquity.

It is however in the form of narrative, and not by diſſertation, that the hiſtorian is to impart his political knowledge. Formal diſcuſſions expoſe him to ſuſpicion of being willing to accommodate his facts to his theory. They have alſo an air of pedantry, and evidently reſult from want of art. For reflections, whether moral, political, or philoſophical, may be inſinuated in the body of a narrative.

Clearneſs, order, and connexion are primary virtues in hiſtorical narration. Theſe are attained, when the hiſtorian is complete maſter of his ſubject; can ſee the whole at one view; and comprehend the dependence of all its parts. Hiſtory being a dignified ſpecies of compoſition, it ſhould alſo be conſpicuous for gravity. There ſhould be nothing mean, nor vulgar in the ſtyle; no quaintneſs, no ſmartneſs, no affectation, no wit. A

hiſtory ſhould likewiſe be intereſting; and this is the quality, which chiefly diſtinguiſhes a writer of genius and eloquence.

To be intereſting, a hiſtorian muſt preſerve a medium between rapid recital and prolix detail. He ſhould know, when to be conciſe, and when to enlarge. He ſhould make a proper ſelection of circumſtances. Theſe give life, body, and coloring to his narration. They conſtitute, what is termed hiſtorical painting.

In all theſe virtues of narration, particularly in pictureſque deſcription, the antients eminently excel. Hence the pleaſure of reading Thucydides, Livy, Salluſt, and Tacitus. In hiſtorical painting there are great varieties. Livy and Tacitus paint in very different ways. The deſcriptions of Livy are full, plain, and natural; thoſe of Tacitus are ſhort and bold.

One embelliſhment, which the moderns have laid aſide, was employed by the antients. They put orations into the mouths of celebrated perſonages. By theſe they diverſified their hiſtory, and conveyed both moral and political inſtruction. Thucydides was the firſt, who adopted this method; and the orations, with which his hiſtory abounds, are valuable remains of antiquity. It it doubtful however, whether this embelliſhment ſhould be allowed to the hiſtorian; for they form a mixture, unnatural to hiſtory, of truth and fiction. The moderns are more chaſte, when on great occaſions

the hiſtorian delivers in his own perſon the ſentiments and reaſonings of oppoſite parties.

Another ſplendid embelliſhment of hiſtory is the delineation of characters. Theſe are conſidered, as exhibitions of fine writing; and hence the difficulty of excelling in this province. For characters may be too ſhining and labored. The accompliſhed hiſtorian avoids here to dazzle too much. He is ſolicitous to give the reſemblance in a ſtyle equally removed from meanneſs and affectation. He ſtudies the grandeur of ſimplicity.

Sound morality ſhould always reign in hiſtory. A hiſtorian ſhould ever ſhow himſelf on the ſide of virtue. It is not however his province, to deliver moral inſtructions in a formal manner. He ſhould excite indignation againſt the deſigning and the vicious; and by appeals to the paſſions he will not only improve his reader, but take away from the natural coolneſs of hiſtorical narration.

In modern times hiſtorical genius has ſhone moſt in Italy. Acuteneſs, political ſagacity, and wiſdom are all conſpicuous in Machiavel, Guicciardin, Davila, Bentivoglio, and Father Paul. In Great Britain hiſtory has been faſhionable only a few years. For, though Clarendon and Burnet are conſiderable hiſtorians, they are inferior to Hume, Robertſon, and Gibbon.

The inferior kinds of hiſtorical compoſition are an-

nals, memoirs, and lives. Annals are a collection of facts in Chronological order; and the properties of an annaliſt are fidelity and diſtinctneſs. / Memoirs are a ſpecies of compoſition, in which an author pretends not to give a complete detail of facts, but only to record, what he himſelf knew, or was concerned in, or what illuſtrates the conduct of ſome perſon, or ſome tranſaction, which he chooſes for his ſubject. It is not therefore expected of ſuch a writer, that he poſſeſs the ſame profound reſearch, and thoſe ſuperior talents, which are requiſite in a hiſtorian. It is chiefly required of him, that he be ſprightly and intereſting. The French during two centuries have poured forth a flood of memoirs; the moſt of which are little more, than agreeable trifles. We muſt however except from this cenſure the memoirs of the Cardinal de Retz, and thoſe of the Duke of Sully. The former join to a lively narrative great knowledge of human nature. The latter deſerve very particular praiſe. They approach to the uſefulneſs and dignity of legitimate hiſtory. They are full of virtue and good ſenſe; and are well calculated to form both the heads and hearts of thoſe, who are deſigned for public buſineſs and high ſtations in the world.

Biography is a very uſeful kind of compoſition; leſs ſtately, than hiſtory; but perhaps not leſs inſtructive. It affords full opportunity of diſplaying the characters of eminent men, and of entering into a thorough acquaint-

ance with them. In this kind of writing Plutarch excels; but his matter is better, than his manner; he has no peculiar beauty, nor elegance. His judgment and accuracy alſo are ſometimes taxed. But he is a very humane writer, and fond of diſplaying great men in the gentle lights of retirement.

Before we conclude this ſubject, it is proper to obſerve, that of late years a great improvement has been introduced into hiſtorical compoſition. More particular attention, than formerly, has been given to laws, cuſtoms, commerce, religion, literature, and to every thing, that ſhows the ſpirit and genius of nations. It is now conceived, that a hiſtorian ought to illuſtrate manners as well, as facts and events. Whatever diſplays the ſtate of mankind in different periods; whatever illuſtrates the progreſs of the human mind; is more uſeful, than details of ſieges and battles.

PHILOSOPHICAL WRITING AND DIALOGUE.

OF Philoſophy the profeſſed deſign is inſtruction. With the philoſopher therefore ſtyle, form, and dreſs are inferior objects. But they muſt not be wholly neglected. The ſame truths and reaſonings, delivered with elegance, will ſtrike more, than in a dull and dry manner.

Beyond mere perſpicuity the ſtricteſt preciſion and accuracy are required in a philoſophical writer; and theſe qualities may be poſſeſſed without dryneſs. Philoſophical writing admits a poliſhed, neat, and elegant ſtyle. It admits the calm figures of ſpeech; but rejects, whatever is florid and tumid. Plato and Cicero have left philoſophical treatiſes, compoſed with much elegance and beauty. Seneca is too fond of an affected, brilliant, ſparkling manner. Locke's Treatiſe on Human Underſtanding is a model of a clear and diſtinct philoſophical ſtyle. In the writings of Shaftſbury on the other hand philoſophy is dreſſed up with too much ornament and finery.

Among the antients philoſophical writing often aſſumed the form of dialogue. Plato is eminent for the beauty of his dialogues. In richneſs of imagination no philoſophic writer, antient or modern, is equal to him. His only fault is the exceſſive fertility of his imagination, which ſometimes obſcures his judgment, and frequently carries him into allegory, fiction, enthuſiaſm, and the airy regions of myſtical theology. Cicero's dialogues are not ſo ſpirited and characteriſtical, as thoſe of Plato. They are however agreeable, and well ſupported; and ſhow us converſation, carried on among ſome principal perſons of antient Rome with freedom, good breeding, and dignity. Of the light and humorous dialogue Lucian is a model; and he has been imitated by ſeveral modern writers. Fontenelle has writ-

ten dialogues, which are ſprightly and agreeable; but his characters, whoever his perſonages be, all become Frenchmen. The divine dialogues of Dr. Henry More amid the academic ſtiffneſs of the age are often remarkable for character and vivacity. Biſhop Berkley's dialogues are abſtract, yet perſpicuous.

EPISTOLARY WRITING.

IN epiſtolary writing we expect eaſe and familiarity; and much of its charm depends on its introducing us into ſome acquaintance with the writer. Its fundamental requiſites are nature and ſimplicity, ſprightlineſs and wit. The ſtyle of letters, like that of converſation, ſhould flow eaſily. It ought to be neat and correct, but no more. Cicero's epiſtles are the moſt valuable collection of letters, extant in any language. They are compoſed with purity and elegance, but without the leaſt affectation. Several letters of Lord Bolingbroke and of Biſhop Atterbury are maſterly. In thoſe of Pope there is generally too much ſtudy; and his letters to ladies in particular are full of affectation. Thoſe of Swift and Arbuthnot are written with eaſe and ſimplicity. Of a familiar correſpondence the moſt accompliſhed model are the letters of Madame de Sevignè. They are eaſy, varied, lively, and beautiful. The letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague are perhaps more agreeable to the epiſtolary ſtyle, than any in the Engliſh language.

FICTITIOUS HISTORY.

THIS ſpecies of compoſition includes a very numerous, and in general a very inſignificant claſs of writings, called romances and novels. Of theſe however the influence is known to be great both on the morals and taſte of a nation. Notwithſtanding the bad ends, to which this mode of writing is applied, it might be employed for very uſeful purpoſes. Romances and novels deſcribe human life and manners, and diſcover the errors, into which we are betrayed by the paſſions. Wiſe men in all ages have uſed fables and fictions, as vehicles of knowledge; and it is an obſervation of Lord Bacon, that the common affairs of the world are inſufficient to fill the mind of man. He muſt create worlds of his own, and wander in the regions of imagination.

All nations whatſoever have diſcovered a love of fiction, and talents for invention. The Indians, Perſians, and Arabians abounded in fables and parables. Among the Greeks we hear of the Ionian and Mileſian tales. During the dark ages fiction aſſumed an unuſual form from the prevalence of chivalry. Romances aroſe, and carried the marvellous to its ſummit. Their knights were patterns not only of the moſt heroic courage, but of religion, generoſity, courteſy, and fidelity; and the heroines were no leſs diſtinguiſhed for modeſty, delicacy, and dignity of manners. Of theſe romances the

moſt perfect model is the Orlando Furioſo. But, as magic and enchantment came to be diſbelieved and ridiculed, the chivalerian romances were diſcontinued, and were ſucceeded by a new ſpecies of fictitious writing.

Of the ſecond ſtage of romance writing the Cleopatra of Madame Scuderi and the Arcadia of Sir Philip Sydney are good examples. In theſe however there was ſtill too large a proportion of the marvellous; and the books were too voluminous and tedious. Romance writing appeared therefore in a new form; and dwindled down to the familiar novel. Intereſting ſituations in real life are the groundwork of novel writing. Upon this plan the French have produced ſome works of conſiderable merit. Such are the Gil Blas of Le Sage and the Marianne of Marivaux.

In this mode of writing the Engliſh are inferior to the French; yet in this kind there are ſome performances, which diſcover the ſtrength of the Britiſh genius. No fiction was ever better ſupported, than the Adventures of Robinſon Cruſoe. Fielding's novels are highly diſtinguiſhed for humor and boldneſs of character. Richardſon, the author of Clariſſa, is the moſt moral of all our novel writers; but he poſſeſſes the unfortunate talent of ſpinning out pieces of amuſement into an immeaſurable length. The trivial performances, which daily appear under the title of lives, adventures, and hiſtories, by anonymous authors, are moſt inſipid; and, it muſt be confeſſed, often tend to deprave the morals, and to encourage diſſipation and idleneſs.

NATURE OF POETRY.

Its ORIGIN and PROGRESS. VERSIFICATION.

WHAT, it may be aſked, is poetry; and how does it differ from proſe? Many diſputes have been maintained among critics upon theſe queſtions. The eſſence of poetry is ſuppoſed by Ariſtotle, Plato, and others, to conſiſt in fiction. But this is too limited a deſcription. Many think the characteriſtic of poetry lies in imitation. But imitation of manners and characters may be carried on in proſe as well, as in poetry.

Perhaps the beſt definition is this, "poetry is the "language of paſſion, or of enlivened imagination, "formed moſt commonly into regular numbers." As the primary object of a poet is to pleaſe and to move; it is to the imagination and the paſſions, that he addreſſes himſelf. It is by pleaſing and moving, that he aims to inſtruct and reform.

Poetry is older, than proſe. In the beginning of ſociety there were occaſions, upon which men met together for feaſts and ſacrifices, when muſic, dancing, and ſongs were the chief entertainment. The meetings of American tribes are diſtinguiſhed by muſic and ſongs. In ſongs they celebrate their religious rites and martial achievements; and in ſuch ſongs we trace the beginning of poetic compoſition.

Man is by nature both a poet and muſician. The ſame impulſe, which produced a poetic ſtyle, prompted a certain melody, or modulation of ſound, ſuited to the emotions of joy or grief, love or anger. Muſic and poetry are united in ſong, and mutually aſſiſt and exalt each other. The firſt poets ſung their own verſes. Hence the origin of verſification, or the arrangement of words to tune or melody.

Poets and ſongs are the firſt objects, that make their appearance in all nations. Apollo, Orpheus, and Amphion were the firſt tamers of mankind among the Greeks. The Gothic nations had their ſcalders, or poets. The Celtic tribes had their bards. Poems and ſongs are among the antiquities of all countries; and, as the occaſions of their being compoſed are nearly the ſame; ſo they remarkably reſemble each other in ſtyle. They compriſe the celebration of gods, and heroes, and victories. They abound in fire and enthuſiaſm; they are wild, irregular, and glowing.

During the infancy of poetry all its different kinds were mingled in the ſame compoſition; but in the progreſs of ſociety poems aſſumed their different regular forms. Time ſeparated into claſſes the ſeveral kinds of poetic compoſition. The ode and the elegy, the epic poem and the drama, are all reduced to rule, and exerciſe the acuteneſs of criticiſm.

ENGLISH VERSIFICATION.

NATIONS, whoſe language and pronunciation were muſical, reſted their verſification chiefly on the quantities of their ſyllables; but mere quantity has very little effect in Engliſh verſe. For the difference, made between long and ſhort ſyllables in our manner of pronouncing them, is very inconſiderable. The only perceptible difference among our ſyllables ariſes from that ſtrong percuſſion of voice, which is termed accent. This accent however does not always make the ſyllable longer; but only gives it more force of ſound; and it is rather upon a certain order and ſucceſſion of accented and unaccented ſyllables, than upon their quantity, that the melody of our verſe depends.

In the conſtitution of our verſe there is another eſſential circumſtance. This is the cæſural pauſe, which falls near the middle of each line. This pauſe may fall after the fourth, fifth, ſixth, or ſeventh ſyllable; and by this mean uncommon variety and richneſs are added to Engliſh verſification.

Our Engliſh verſe is of Iambic ſtructure, compoſed of a nearly alternate ſucceſſion of unaccented and accented ſyllables. When the pauſe falls earlieſt, that is, after the fourth ſyllable, the briſkeſt melody is thereby

formed. Of this the following lines from Pope are a happy illuſtration;

On her white breaſt | a ſparkling croſs ſhe wore,
Which Jews might kiſs, | and Infidels adore;
Her lively looks | a ſprightly mind diſcloſe,
Quick, as her eyes, | and as unfix'd, as thoſe.
Favors to none, | to all ſhe ſmiles extends,
Oft ſhe rejects, | but never once offends.

When the pauſe falls after the fifth ſyllable, dividing the line into two equal portions, the melody is ſenſibly altered. The verſe, loſing the briſk air of the former pauſe, becomes more ſmooth and flowing.

Eternal ſunſhine | of the ſpotleſs mind,
Each prayer accepted, | and each wiſh reſign'd.

When the pauſe follows the ſixth ſyllable, the melody becomes grave. The movement of the verſe is more ſolemn and meaſured.

The wrath of Peleus' ſon, | the direful ſpring
Of all the Grecian woes, | O Goddeſs, ſing!

The grave cadence becomes ſtill more ſenſible, when the pauſe follows the ſeventh ſyllable. This kind of verſe however ſeldom occurs; and its effect is to diverſify the melody.

And in the ſmooth, deſcriptive | murmur ſtill.
Long loved, adored ideas, | all adieu.

Our blank verſe is a noble, bold, and diſencumbered mode of verſification. It is free from the full cloſe, which rhyme forces upon the ear at the end of every couplet. Hence it is peculiarly ſuited to ſubjects of dignity and force. It is more favorable, than rhyme, to the ſublime and the highly pathetic. It is the moſt proper for an epic poem and for tragedy. Rhyme finds its proper place in the middle regions of poetry; and blank verſe in the higheſt.

The preſent form of our Engliſh heroic rhyme in couplets is modern. The meaſure, uſed in the days of Elizabeth, James, and Charles I. was the ſtanza of eight lines. Waller was the firſt, who introduced couplets; and Dryden eſtabliſhed the uſage. Waller ſmoothed our verſe, and Dryden perfected it. The verſification of Pope is peculiar. It is flowing, ſmooth, and correct in the higheſt degree. He has totally thrown aſide the triplets, ſo common in Dryden. In eaſe and variety Dryden excels Pope. He frequently makes his couplets run into one another with ſomewhat of the freedom of blank verſe.

PASTORAL POETRY.

IT was not, before men had begun to aſſemble in great cities, and the buſtle of courts and large ſocieties was known, that paſtoral poetry aſſumed its preſ-

ent form. From the tumult of a city life men looked back with complacency to the innocence of rural retirement. In the court of Ptolemy Theocritus wrote the firſt paſtorals, with which we are acquainted; and in the court of Auguſtus Virgil imitated him.

The paſtoral is a very agreeable ſpecies of poetry. It lays before us the gay and pleaſing ſcenes of nature. It recalls objects, which are commonly the delight of our childhood and youth. It exhibits a life, with which we aſſociate ideas of innocence, peace, and leiſure. It tranſports us into Elyſian regions. It preſents many objects favorable to poetry; rivers and mountains, meadows and hills, rocks and trees, flocks and ſhepherds void of care.

A paſtoral poet is careful to exhibit, whatever is moſt pleaſing in the paſtoral ſtate. He paints its ſimplicity, tranquillity, innocence, and happineſs; but conceals its rudeneſs and miſery. If his pictures be not thoſe of real life; they muſt reſemble it. This is a general idea of paſtoral poetry. But, to underſtand it more perfectly, let us conſider, 1. The ſcenery. 2. The characters; and laſtly the ſubjects, it ſhould exhibit.

The ſcene muſt always be in the country; and the poet muſt have a talent for deſcription. In this reſpect Virgil is excelled by Theocritus, whoſe deſcriptions are richer and more pictureſque. In every paſtoral a rural proſpect ſhould be drawn with diſtinctneſs. It is not

enough to have unmeaning groups of roſes and violets, of birds, breezes, and brooks thrown together. A good poet gives ſuch a landſcape, as a painter might copy. His objects are particulariſed. The ſtream, the rock, or the tree, ſo ſtands forth, as to make a figure in the imagination, and give a pleaſing conception of the place, where we are.

In his alluſions to natural objects as well, as in profeſſed deſcriptions of the ſcenery, the poet muſt ſtudy variety. He muſt diverſify his face of nature by preſenting us new images. He muſt alſo ſuit the ſcenery to the ſubject of his paſtoral; and exhibit nature under ſuch forms, as may correſpond with the emotions and ſentiments, he deſcribes. Thus Virgil, when he gives the lamentation of a deſpairing lover, communicates a gloom to the ſcene.

Tantum inter denſas, umbroſa cacumina, fagos,
Aſſiduè venichat; ibi hæc incondita ſolus
Montibus et ſylvis ſtudio jactabat inani.

With regard to the characters in paſtorals it is not ſufficient, that they be perſons reſiding in the country. Courtiers and citizens, who reſort thither occaſionally, are not the characters, expected in paſtorals. We expect to be entertained by ſhepherds, or perſons wholly engaged in rural occupations. The ſhepherd muſt be plain and unaffected in his manner of thinking. An amiable ſimplicity muſt be the groundwork of his

character; though there is no neceſſity for his being dull and inſipid. He may have good ſenſe, and even vivacity; tender and delicate feelings. But he muſt never deal in general reflections, or abſtract reaſonings; nor in conceits of gallantry; for theſe are conſequences of refinement. When Aminta in Taſſo is diſentangling his miſtreſs's hair from the tree, to which a ſavage had bound it; he is made to ſay, "Cruel tree, how "couldſt thou injure that lovely hair, which did thee "ſo much honor? Thy rugged trunk was not wor-"thy of ſo lovely knots. What advantage have the "ſervants of love, if thoſe precious chains are common "to them and to trees?" Strained ſentiments, like theſe, ſuit not the woods. The language of rural perſonages is that of plain ſenſe and natural feeling; as in the following beautiful lines of Virgil;

Sepibus in noſtris parvam te roſcida mala
(Dux ego veſter eram) vidi cum matre legentem;
Alter ab undecimo tum me jam ceperat annus,
Jam fragiles poteram a terra contingere ramos.
Ut vidi, ut perii, ut me malus abſtulit error!

The next inquiry is, what are the proper ſubjects of paſtorals? For it is not enough, that the poet give us ſhepherds diſcourſing together. Every good poem has a ſubject, that in ſome way intereſts us. In this lies the difficulty of paſtoral writing. The active ſcenes of country life are too barren of incidents. The condition of a ſhepherd has few things in it, that excite cu-

riosity or surprise. Hence of all poems the pastoral is most meagre in subject, and least diversified in strain. Yet this defect is not to be ascribed solely to barrenness of subjects. It is in a great measure the fault of the poet. For human nature and human passions are much the same in every situation and rank of life. What a variety of objects within the rural sphere do the passions present! The struggles and ambition of shepherds; their adventures; their disquiet and felicity; the rivalship of lovers; unexpected successes and disasters; are all proper subjects for the pastoral muse.

Theocritus and Virgil are the two great fathers of pastoral writing. For simplicity of sentiment, harmony of numbers, and richness of scenery, the former is highly distinguished. But he sometimes descends to ideas, that are gross and mean, and makes his shepherds abusive and immodest. Virgil on the contrary preserves the pastoral simplicity without any offensive rusticity.

Modern writers of pastorals have in general imitated the antient poets. Sannazarius however, a Latin poet, in the age of Leo X. attempted a bold innovation by composing piscatory eclogues, and changing the scene from the woods to the sea, and the character from shepherds to fishermen. But the attempt was so unhappy, that he has no followers. The toilsome life of fishermen has nothing agreeable, to present to the imagination. Fishes and marine productions have nothing poetic-

al in them. Of all the moderns Geſner, a poet of Switzerland, has been the moſt happy in paſtoral compoſition. Many new ideas are introduced in his Idyls. His ſcenery is ſtriking, and his deſcriptions lively. He is pathetic, and writes to the heart. Neither the paſtorals of Pope, nor of Philips, do much honor to Engliſh poetry. The paſtorals of Pope are barren; their chief merit is the ſmoothneſs of the numbers. Philips attempted to be more ſimple and natural, than Pope; but wanted genius to ſupport the attempt. His topics, like thoſe of Pope, are beaten; and inſtead of being natural or ſimple he is flat and inſipid. Shenſtone's paſtoral ballad is one of the moſt elegant poems of the kind in the Engliſh language.

In latter times paſtoral writing has been extended into regular drama; and this is the chief improvement, the moderns have made in it. Two pieces of this kind are highly celebrated, Guarini's Paſtor Fido, and Taſſo's Aminta. Both poſſeſs great beauties; but the latter is the preferable poem, becauſe leſs intricate, and leſs affected; though not wholly free from Italian refinement. As a poem however, it has great merit. The poetry is pleaſing and gentle, and the Italian language confers on it much of that ſoftneſs, which is ſuited to the paſtoral.

The Gentle Shepherd of Allan Ramſay is a paſtoral drama, which will bear compariſon with any compoſition of the kind in any language. To this admira-

ble poem it is a disadvantage, that it is written in the old rustic dialect of Scotland, which must soon be obsolete; and it is a farther disadvantage, that it is formed so entirely on the rural manners of Scotland, that none, but a native of that country, can thoroughly understand and relish it. It is full of natural description, and excels in tenderness of sentiment. The characters are well drawn, the incidents affecting, the scenery and manners lively and just.

LYRIC POETRY.

THE Ode is a species of poetry, which has much dignity, and in which many writers in every age have distinguished themselves. Ode in Greek is the same with song or hymn; and lyric poetry implies that the verses are accompanied with a lyre, or musical instrument. In the ode poetry retains its first form, and its original union with music. Sentiments commonly constitute its subject. It recites not actions. Its spirit and the manner of its execution mark its character. It admits a bolder and more passionate strain, than is allowed in simple recital. Hence the enthusiasm, that belongs to it. Hence that neglect of regularity, those digressions, and that disorder, it is supposed to admit.

All odes may be classed under four denominations. 1. Hymns addressed to God, or composed on religious

ſubjects. 2. Heroic odes, which concern the celebration of heroes, and great actions. 3. Moral and philoſophical odes, which refer chiefly to virtue, friendſhip, and humanity. 4. Feſtive and amorous odes, which are calculated merely for amuſement and pleaſure.

Enthuſiaſm being conſidered, as the characteriſtic of the ode, it has often degenerated into licentiouſneſs. This ſpecies of writing has above all others been infected by want of order, method, and connexion. The poet is out of ſight in a moment. He is ſo abrupt and eccentric, ſo irregular and obſcure, that we cannot follow him. It is not indeed neceſſary, that the ſtructure of the ode be ſo perfectly regular, as an epic poem. But in every compoſition there ought to be a whole; and this whole ſhould conſiſt of connected parts. The tranſition from thought to thought may be light and delicate, but the connexion of ideas ſhould be preſerved; the author ſhould think, and not rave.

Pindar, the father of lyric poetry, has led his imitators into enthuſiaſtic wildneſs. They imitate his diſorder without catching his ſpirit. In Horace's odes every thing is correct, harmonious, and happy. His elevation is moderate, not rapturous. Grace and elegance are his characteriſtics. He ſupports a moral ſentiment with dignity, touches a gay one with felicity, and has the art of trifling moſt agreeably. His language too is moſt fortunate.

Many Latin poets of later ages have imitated him. Caſimir, a Poliſh poet of the laſt century, is of this number; and diſcovers a conſiderable degree of original genius and poetic fire. He is however far inferior to the Roman in graceful expreſſion. Buchanan in ſome of his lyric compoſitions is very elegant and claſſical.

In our own language Dryden's ode on St. Cecilia is well known. Mr. Gray in ſome of his odes is celebrated for tenderneſs and ſublimity; and in Dodſley's Miſcellanies are ſeveral very beautiful lyric poems. Profeſſedly Pindaric odes are ſeldom intelligible. Cowley is doubly harſh in his Pindaric compoſitions. His Anacreontic odes are happier; and perhaps the moſt agreeable and perfect in their kind of all his poems.

DIDACTIC POETRY.

OF didactic poetry it is the expreſs intention to convey inſtruction and knowledge. It may be executed in different ways. The poet may treat ſome inſtructive ſubject in a regular form; or without intending a great or regular work he may inveigh againſt particular vices, or make ſome moral obſervations on human life and characters.

The higheſt ſpecies of didactic poetry is a regular treatiſe on ſome philoſophical, grave, or uſeful ſubject,

Such are the books of Lucretius de Rerum Natura, the Georgics of Virgil, Pope's Eſſay on Criticiſm, Akenſide's Pleaſures of the Imagination, Armſtrong on Health, and the Art of Poetry by Horace, Vida, and Boileau.

In all ſuch works, as inſtruction is the profeſſed object, the chief merit conſiſts in ſound thought, juſt principles, and apt illuſtrations. It is neceſſary however that the poet enliven his leſſons by figures, incidents, and poetical painting. Virgil in his Georgics embelliſhes the moſt trivial circumſtances in rural life. When he teaches that the labor of the farmer muſt begin in ſpring, he expreſſes himſelf thus;

Vere novo gelidus canis cum montibus humor
Liquitur, et Zephyro putris ſe gleba reſolvit;
Depreſſo incipiat jam tum mihi Taurus aratro
Ingemere, et ſulco attritus ſplendeſcere vomer.

In all didactic works ſuch method is requiſite, as will clearly exhibit a connected train of inſtruction. With regard to epiſodes and embelliſhments writers of didactic poetry are indulged great liberties. For in a poetical performance a continued ſeries of inſtruction without embelliſhment ſoon fatigues. The digreſſions in the Georgics of Virgil are his principal beauties. The happineſs of a cõuntry life, the fable of Ariſteus, and the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice, cannot be praiſed too much.

A didactic poet ought alſo to connect his epiſodes with his ſubject. In this Virgil is eminent. Among modern didactic poets Akenſide and Armſtrong are diſtinguiſhed. The former is rich and poetical; but the latter maintains greater equality, and more chaſte and correct elegance.

Of didactic poetry ſatires and epiſtles run into the moſt familiar ſtyle. Satire ſeems to have been at firſt a relic of antient comedy, the groſſneſs of which was corrected by Ennius and Lucilius. At length Horace brought it into its preſent form. Reformation of manners is its profeſſed end; and vice and vicious characters are the objects of its cenſure. There are three different modes, in which it has been conducted by the three great antient ſatiriſts, Horace, Juvenal, and Perſius.

The ſatires of Horace have not much elevation. They exhibit a meaſured proſe. Eaſe and grace characterize his manner; and he glances rather at the follies and weakneſſes of mankind, than at their vices. He ſmiles, while he reproves. He moralizes, like a ſound philoſopher, but with the politeneſs of a courtier. Juvenal is more declamatory and ſerious; and has greater ſtrength and fire. Perſius has diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a noble and ſublime morality.

Poetical epiſtles, when employed on moral or critical ſubjects, ſeldom riſe into a higher ſtrain of poetry, than

ſatires. But in the epiſtolary form many other ſubjects may be treated; as love, poetry, or elegiac. The ethical epiſtles of Pope are a model; and in them he ſhows the ſtrength of his genius. Here he had a full opportunity for diſplaying his judgment and wit, his conciſe and happy expreſſion, together with the harmony of his numbers. His imitations of Horace are ſo happy, that it is difficult to ſay, whether the original or the copy ought to be moſt admired.

Among moral and didactic writers Dr. Young ought not to be paſſed over in ſilence. Genius appears in all his works; but his Univerſal Paſſion may be conſidered, as poſſeſſing the full merit of that animated conciſeneſs, particularly requiſite in ſatirical and didactic compoſitions. At the ſame time it is to be obſerved, that his wit is often too ſparkling, and his ſentences too pointed. In his Night Thoughts there is great energy of expreſſion, ſeveral pathetic paſſages, many happy images, and many pious reflections. But the ſentiments are frequently overſtrained and turgid, and the ſtyle harſh and obſcure.

DESCRIPTIVE POETRY.

IN deſcriptive poetry the higheſt exertions of genius may be diſplayed. In general indeed deſcription is introduced, as an embelliſhment, not as the ſubject of a

regular work. It is the teſt of a poet's imagination, and always diſtinguiſhes an original from a ſecond rate genius. A writer of an inferior claſs ſees nothing new or peculiar in the object, he would paint; his conceptions are looſe and vague; and his expreſſions feeble and general. A true poet places an object before our eyes. He gives it the coloring of life; a painter might copy from him.

The great art of pictureſque deſcription lies in the ſelection of circumſtances. Theſe ought never to be vulgar or common. They ſhould mark ſtrongly the object. No general deſcription is good; all diſtinct ideas are formed upon particulars. There ſhould alſo be uniformity in the circumſtances ſelected. In deſcribing a great object every circumſtance brought forward ſhould tend to aggrandize; and in deſcribing a gay object all the circumſtances ſhould tend to beautify it. Laſtly, the circumſtances in deſcription ſhould be expreſſed with conciſeneſs and ſimplicity.

The largeſt and fulleſt deſcriptive performance in perhaps any language is Thomſon's Seaſons; a work, which poſſeſſes very uncommon merit. The ſtyle is ſplendid and ſtrong, but ſometimes harſh and indiſtinct. He is an animated and beautiful deſcriber; for he had a feeling heart and a warm imagination. He ſtudied nature with care; was enamoured of her beauties; and had the happy talent of painting them, like a maſter. To ſhow the power of a ſingle well choſen circum-

ſtance in heightening a deſcription, the following paſſage may be produced from his Summer, where, relating the effects of heat in the torrid zone, he is led to take notice of the peſtilence, that deſtroyed the Engliſh fleet at Carthagena under Admiral Vernon.

——You, gallant Vernon, ſaw
The miſerable ſcene; you pitying ſaw
To infant weakneſs ſunk the warrior's arm;
Saw the deep racking pang; the ghaſtly form;
The lip pale quivering, and the beamleſs eye
No more with ardor bright; you heard the groans
Of agonizing ſhips from ſhore to ſhore;
Heard nightly plunged amid the ſullen waves
The frequent corſe.——

All the circumſtances, here ſelected, tend to heighten the diſmal ſcene; but the laſt image is the moſt ſtriking in the picture.

Of deſcriptive narration there are beautiful examples in Parnell's Tale of the Hermit. The ſetting forth of the hermit to viſit the world, his meeting a companion, and the houſes, in which they are entertained, of the vain man, the covetous man, and the good man, are pieces of highly finiſhed painting. But the richeſt and the moſt remarkable of all the deſcriptive poems in the Engliſh language are the Allegro and the Penſeroſo of Milton. They are the ſtorehouſe, whence many ſucceeding poets have enriched their deſcriptions, and are inimitably fine poems. Take, for inſtance, the following lines from the Penſeroſo;

——————I walk unſeen
On the dry, ſmooth-ſhaven green,
To behold the wandering moon
Riding near her higheſt noon;
And oft, as if her head ſhe bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of riſing ground
I hear the far off curfew ſound,
Over ſome wide watered ſhore
Swinging ſlow with ſolemn roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some ſtill removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all reſort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowſy charm,
To bleſs the doors from nightly harm;
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be ſeen in ſome high lonely tower,
Exploring Plato, to unfold
What worlds, or what vaſt regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forſook
Her manſion in this fleſhy nook;
And of theſe demons, that are found
In fire, in air, flood, or under ground.

Here are no general expreſſions; all is pictureſque, expreſſive, and conciſe. One ſtrong point of view is exhibited to the reader; and the impreſſion made is lively and intereſting.

Both Homer and Virgil excel in poetical deſcription.

In the ſecond Æneid the ſacking of Troy is ſo particularly deſcribed, that the reader finds himſelf in the midſt of the ſcene. The death of Priam is a maſterpiece of deſcription. Homer's battles are all wonderful. Oſſian too paints in ſtrong colors, and is remarkable for touching the heart. He thus pourtrays the ruins of Balclutha; "I have ſeen the walls of Balclu-"tha; but they were deſolate. The fire had reſound-"ed within the halls; and the voice of the people is "now heard no more. The ſtream of Clutha was re-"moved from its place by the fall of the walls; the "thiſtle ſhook there its lonely head; the moſs whiſtled "to the wind. The fox looked out of the window; "the rank graſs waved round his head. Deſolate is "the dwelling of Moina; ſilence is in the houſe of her "fathers."

Much of the beauty of deſcriptive poetry depends upon a proper choice of epithets. Many poets are often careleſs in this particular; hence the multitude of unmeaning and redundant epithets. Hence the "Liqui-"di Fontes" of Virgil, and the "Prata Canis Albi-"cant Pruinis" of Horace. To obſerve that water is liquid, and that ſnow is white, is little better, than mere tautology. Every epithet ſhould add a new idea to the word, which it qualifies. So in Milton;

Who ſhall tempt with wandering feet
The dark, unbottomed, infinite abyſs;
And through the palpable obſcure find out

His uncouth way? Or ſpread his airy flight,
Upborn with indefatigable wings,
Over the vaſt abrupt?

The deſcription here is ſtrengthened by the epithets. The wandering feet, the unbottomed abyſs, the palpable obſcure, the uncouth way, the indefatigable wings, are all happy expreſſions.

THE POETRY OF THE HEBREWS.

IN treating of the various kinds of poetry that of the Scriptures juſtly deſerves a place. The ſacred books preſent us the moſt antient monuments of poetry now extant, and furniſh a curious ſubject of criticiſm. They diſplay the taſte of a remote age and country. They exhibit a ſingular, but beautiful ſpecies of compoſition; and it muſt give great pleaſure, if we find the beauty and dignity of the ſtyle adequate to the weight and importance of the matter. Dr. Lowth's learned treatiſe on the poetry of the Hebrews ought to be peruſed by all. It is an exceedingly valuable work both for elegance of ſtyle and juſtneſs of criticiſm. We cannot do better than to follow the track of this ingenious author.

Among the Hebrews poetry was cultivated from the earlieſt times. Its general conſtruction is ſingular and peculiar. It conſiſts in dividing every period into correſpondent, for the moſt part into equal members,

which anſwer to each other both in ſenſe and ſound. In the firſt member of a period a ſentiment is expreſſed; and in the ſecond the ſame ſentiment is amplified, or repeated in different terms, or ſometimes contraſted with its oppoſite. Thus, "Sing unto the Lord a new "ſong; ſing unto the Lord all the earth. Sing unto "the Lord, and bleſs his name; ſhew forth his ſalvation "from day to day. Declare his glory among the "heathen; his wonders among all people."

This form of poetical compoſition is deduced from the manner, in which the Hebrews ſung their ſacred hymns. Theſe were accompanied with muſic, and performed by bands of ſingers and muſicians, who alternately anſwered each other. One band began the hymn thus; "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice;" and the chorus, or ſemi-chorus, took up the correſponding verſicle; "Let the multitudes of the iſles be glad "thereof."

But, independent of its peculiar mode of conſtruction, the ſacred poetry is diſtinguiſhed by the higheſt beauties of ſtrong, conciſe, bold, and figurative expreſſion. Conciſeneſs and ſtrength are two of its moſt remarkable characters. The ſentences are always ſhort. The ſame thought is never dwelt upon long. Hence the ſublimity of the Hebrew poetry; and all writers, who attempt the ſublime, might profit much by imitating in this reſpect the ſtyle of the old teſtament. No writings abound ſo much in bold and animated figures, as the

ſacred books. Metaphors, compariſons, allegories, and perſonifications are particularly frequent. But, to reliſh theſe figures juſtly, we muſt tranſport ourſelves into Judea, and attend to particular circumſtances in it. Through all that region little or no rain falls in the ſummer months. Hence, to repreſent diſtreſs, frequent alluſions are made to a dry and thirſty land, where no water is; and hence, to deſcribe a change from diſtreſs to proſperity, their metaphors are founded on the falling of ſhowers, and the burſting out of ſprings in a deſert. Thus in Iſaiah, "The wilderneſs and the ſoli-"tary place ſhall be glad, and the deſert ſhall rejoice "and bloſſom, as the roſe. For in the wilderneſs ſhall "waters break out, and ſtreams in the deſert; and "the parched ground ſhall become a pool; and the "thirſty land ſprings of water; in the habitation of "dragons there ſhall be graſs with ruſhes and reeds."

Compariſons, employed by the ſacred poets, are generally ſhort, touching only one point of reſemblance. Such is the following; "He, that ruleth over men, "muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God; and he ſhall "be, as the light of the morning, when the ſun riſeth; "even a morning without clouds; as the tender graſs, "ſpringing out of the earth by clear ſhining after "rain."

Allegory is likewiſe frequently employed in the ſacred books; and a fine inſtance of this occurs in the lxxxth Pſalm, wherein the people of Iſrael are compar-

ed to a vine. Of parables the prophetical writings are full; and, if to us they ſometimes appear obſcure, we ſhould remember that in early times it was univerſally the cuſtom among all eaſtern nations, to convey ſacred truths under myſterious figures.

The figure however, which elevates beyond all others the poetical ſtyle of the Scriptures, is perſonification. The perſonifications of the inſpired writers exceed in force and magnificence thoſe of all other poets. This is more particularly true, when any appearance or operation of the Almighty is concerned. "Before him "went the peſtilence. The waters ſaw thee, O God, "and were afraid. The mountains ſaw thee, and they "trembled. The overflowings of the waters paſſed "by; the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his "hands on high." The poetry of the Scriptures is very different from modern poetry. It is the burſt of inſpiration. Bold ſublimity, not correct elegance, is its character.

The ſeveral kinds of poetry, found in Scripture, are chiefly the didactic, elegiac, paſtoral, and lyric. The book of Proverbs is the principal inſtance of the didactic ſpecies of poetry. Of elegiac poetry the lamentation of David over Jonathan is a very beautiful inſtance. Of paſtoral poetry the Song of Solomon is a high exemplification; and of lyric poetry the Old Teſtament is full. The whole book of Pſalms is a collection of ſacred odes.

Among the compoſers of the ſacred books there is an evident diverſity of ſtyle. Of the ſacred poets the moſt eminent are the author of the book of Job, David, and Iſaiah. In the compoſitions of David there is a great variety of manner. In the ſoft and tender he excels; and in his Pſalms are many lofty paſſages. But in ſtrength of deſcription he yields to Job; in ſublimity to Iſaiah. Without exception Iſaiah is the moſt ſublime of all poets. Dr. Lowth compares Iſaiah to Homer, Jeremiah to Simonides, and Ezekiel to Æſchylus. Among the minor prophets, Hoſea, Joel, Micah, Habakkuk, and eſpecially Nahum, are diſtinguiſhed for poetical ſpirit. In the prophecies of Daniel and Jonah there is no poetry.

The book of Job is extremely antient; the author uncertain; and it is remarkable, that it has no connexion with the affairs or manners of the Hebrews. It is the moſt deſcriptive of all the ſacred poems. A peculiar glow of fancy and ſtrength of deſcription characteriſe the author; and no writer abounds ſo much in metaphors. He renders viſible, whatever he treats. The ſcene is laid in the land of Uz, or Idumæa, which is a part of Arabia; and the imagery employed differs from that, which is peculiar to the Hebrews.

EPIC POETRY.

OF all poetical works the epic poem is the moſt dignified. To contrive a ſtory, which is entertaining, important, and inſtructive; to enrich it with happy incidents; to enliven it by a variety of characters and deſcriptions; and to maintain a uniform propriety of ſentiment, and a due elevation of ſtyle, are the higheſt efforts of poetical genius.

An epic poem is the recital of ſome illuſtrious enterpriſe in a poetical form. Epic poetry is of a moral nature; and tends to the promotion of virtue. With this view it acts by extending our ideas of perfection, and exciting admiration. Now this is accompliſhed only by proper repreſentations of heroic deeds and virtuous characters. Valor, truth, juſtice, fidelity, friendſhip, piety, and magnanimity are objects, which the epic muſe preſents to our minds in the moſt ſplendid and honorable colors.

Epic compoſition is diſtinguiſhed from hiſtory by its poetical form, and its liberty of fiction. It is a more calm compoſition, than tragedy. It requires a grave, equal, and ſupported dignity. On ſome occaſions it demands the pathetic and the violent; and it embraces a greater compaſs of time and action, than dramatic writing admits.

The action or ſubject of an epic poem muſt have three properties. It muſt be one; it muſt be great; it muſt be intereſting. One action or enterpriſe muſt conſtitute its ſubject. Ariſtotle inſiſts on unity, as eſſential to epic poetry; becauſe independent facts never affect ſo deeply, as a tale, that is one and connected. Virgil has choſen for his ſubject the eſtabliſhment of Æneas in Italy; and the anger of Achilles with its conſequences is the ſubject of the Iliad.

It is not however to be underſtood, that epic unity excludes all epiſodes. On the contrary critics conſider them, as great ornaments of epic poetry. They diverſify the ſubject, and relieve the reader by ſhifting the ſcene. Thus Hector's viſit to Andromache in the Iliad and Erminia's adventure with the ſhepherd in the ſeventh book of the Jeruſalem afford us a well judged and pleaſing retreat from camps and battles.

Secondly, the ſubject of an epic poem muſt be ſo great and ſplendid, as to fix attention, and to juſtify the magnificent apparatus, the poet beſtows on it. The ſubject ſhould alſo be of antient date. Both Lucan and Voltaire have tranſgreſſed this rule. By confining himſelf too ſtrictly to hiſtorical truth the former does not pleaſe; and the latter has improperly mingled well known events with fictitious. Hence they exhibit not that greatneſs, which the epic requires.

The third requiſite in an epic ſubject is, that it be in-

tereſting. This depends in a great meaſure upon the choice of it. But it depends much more upon the ſkilful management of the poet. He muſt ſo frame his plan, as to comprehend many affecting incidents. He muſt ſometimes dazzle with valiant achievements; ſometimes he muſt be awful and auguſt; often tender and pathetic; and he muſt ſometimes give us gentle and pleaſing ſcenes of love, friendſhip, and affection.

To render the ſubject intereſting, much alſo depends upon the dangers and obſtacles, which muſt be encountered. It is by the management of theſe, that the poet muſt rouſe attention, and hold his reader in ſuſpenſe and agitation.

It is generally ſuppoſed by critics, that an epic poem ſhould conclude ſucceſsfully; as an unhappy concluſion depreſſes the mind. Indeed it is on the proſperous ſide, that epic poets generally conclude. But two authors of great name, Milton and Lucan, hold the contrary courſe. The one concludes with the ſubverſion of Roman liberty; and the other with the expulſion of man from Paradiſe.

No preciſe boundaries can be fixed for the duration of the epic action. The action of the Illiad laſts, according to Boſſu, only forty ſeven days. The action of the Odyſſey extends to eight years and a half; and that of the Æneid includes about ſix years.

The perſonages in an epic poem ſhould be proper and well ſupported. They ſhould diſplay the features of human nature; and may admit different degrees of virtue, and even vice; though the principal characters ſhould be ſuch, as will raiſe admiration and love. Poetic characters are of two ſorts, general and particular. General characters are ſuch, as are wiſe, brave, and virtuous, without any farther diſtinction. Particular characters expreſs the ſpecies of bravery, of wiſdom, and of virtue, for which any one is remarkable. In this diſcrimination of characters Homer excels. Taſſo approaches the neareſt to him in this reſpect; and Virgil is the moſt deficient.

Among epic poets it is the practice to ſelect ſome perſonage, as the hero of the tale. This renders the unity of the ſubject more perfect, and contributes highly to the intereſt and perfection of this ſpecies of writing. It has been aſked, Who then is the hero of Paradiſe Loſt? The devil, ſay ſome critics, who affect to be pleaſant againſt Milton. But they miſtake his intention by ſuppoſing that, whoever is triumphant in the cloſe, muſt be the hero of the poem. For Adam is Milton's hero; that is, the capital and moſt intereſting figure in his poem.

In epic poetry there are beſide human characters gods and ſupernatural beings. This forms, what is called the machinery of epic poetry; and the French ſuppoſe this eſſential to the nature of an epic poem.

They hold that in every epic compoſition the main action is neceſſarily carried on by the intervention of gods. But there ſeems to be no ſolid reaſon for their opinion. Lucan has no gods, nor ſupernatural agents. The author of Leonidas alſo has no machinery.

But, though machinery is not abſolutely neceſſary to the epic plan, it ought not to be totally excluded from it. The marvelous has a great charm for moſt readers. It leads to ſublime deſcription, and fills the imagination. At the ſame time it becomes a poet to be temperate in the uſe of ſupernatural machinery; and ſo to employ the religious faith or ſuperſtition of his country, as to give an air of probability to events, moſt contrary to the common courſe of nature.

With regard to the allegorical perſonages, Fame, Diſcord, Love, and the like, they form the worſt kind of machinery. In deſcription they may ſometimes be allowed; but they ſhould never bear any part in the action of the poem. As they are only mere names of general ideas, they ought not to be conſidered, as perſons; and cannot mingle with human actors without an intolerable confuſion of ſhadows with realities.

In the narration of the poet it is of little conſequence, whether he relate the whole ſtory in his own character, or introduce one of his perſonages, to relate a part of the action, that paſſed before the poem opens. Homer follows one method in his Iliad, and the other in his

Odyſſey. It is to be obſerved however that, if the narrative be given by any of the actors, it gives the poet greater liberty of ſpreading out ſuch parts of the ſubject, as he inclines to dwell upon in perſon, and of compriſing the reſt within a ſhort recital. When the ſubject is of great extent, and comprehends the tranſactions of ſeveral years, as in the Odyſſey and Æneid; this method ſeems preferable. But, when the ſubject is of ſmaller compaſs and ſhorter duration, as in the Iliad and Jeruſalem; the poet may without diſadvantage relate the whole in his own perſon.

What is of moſt importance in the narration is, that it be perſpicuous, animated, and enriched with every poetic beauty. No ſort of compoſition requires more ſtrength, dignity, and fire, than an epic poem. It is the region, in which we look for every thing ſublime in deſcription, tender in ſentiment, and bold or lively in expreſſion. The ornaments of epic poetry are grave and chaſte. Nothing looſe, ludicrous, or affected, finds place there. All the objects, it preſents, ought to be great, tender, or pleaſing. Deſcriptions of diſguſting or ſhocking objects are to be avoided. Hence the fable of the Harpies in the Æneid, and the allegory of Sin and Death in Paradiſe Loſt, ſhould have been omitted.

HOMER's ILIAD AND ODYSSEY.

THE father of epic poetry is Homer; and, in order to reliſh him, we muſt diveſt ourſelves of modern ideas of dignity and refinement, and tranſport our imagination almoſt three thouſand years back in the hiſtory of mankind. The reader is to expect a picture of the antient world. The two great characters of Homer's poetry are fire and ſimplicity. But, to have a clear idea of his merit, let us conſider the Iliad under the three heads of the ſubject or action, the characters, and the narration.

The ſubject of the Iliad is happily choſen. For no ſubject could be more ſplendid, than the Trojan war. A great confederacy of the Grecian ſtates and ten years ſiege of Troy muſt have ſpread far abroad the renown of many military exploits, and given an extenſive intereſt to the heroes, who were concerned in them. Upon theſe traditions Homer grounded his poem; and, as he lived two or three centuries after the Trojan war, he had full liberty to intermingle fable with hiſtory. He choſe not however the whole Trojan war for his ſubject; but with great judgment ſelected the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, which includes the moſt intereſting period of the war. He has thus given greater unity to his poem. He has gained one hero, or principal character, that is, Achilles; and

ſhown the pernicious effects of diſcord among confederated princes.

The praiſe of high invention has in every age been juſtly given to Homer. His incidents, ſpeeches, characters, divine and human; his battles, his little hiſtory pieces of the perſons ſlain, diſcover a boundleſs invention. Nor is his judgment leſs worthy of praiſe. His ſtory is conducted with great art. He riſes upon us gradually. His heroes are introduced with exquiſite ſkill to our acquaintance. The diſtreſs thickens, as the poem advances; every thing ſerves to aggrandize Achilles, and to make him the capital figure.

In characters Homer is without a rival. He abounds in dialogue and converſation, and this produces a ſpirited exhibition of his perſonages. This dramatic method however, though more natural, expreſſive, and animated, is leſs grave and majeſtic, than narrative. Some of Homer's ſpeeches are unſeaſonable, and others trifling. With the Greek vivacity he has alſo ſome of the Greek loquacity.

In no character perhaps does he diſplay greater art, than in that of Helen. Notwithſtanding her frailty and crimes, he contrives to make her an intereſting object. The admiration, with which the old generals behold her, when ſhe is coming toward them; her veiling herſelf and ſhedding tears in the preſence of Priam, her grief at the ſight of Menelaus, her upbraiding of

Paris for his cowardice, and her returning fondneſs for him, are exquiſite ſtrokes, and worthy of a great maſter.

Homer has been accuſed of making Achilles too brutal a character; and critics ſeem to have adopted this cenſure from two lines of Horace;

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
Jura negat ſibi nata; nihil non arrogat armis.

It appears that Horace went beyond the truth. Achilles is paſſionate; but he is not a contemner of law. He has reaſon on his ſide; for, though he diſcovers too much heat, it muſt be allowed, that he had been notoriouſly wronged. Beſide bravery and contempt of death he has the qualities of openneſs and ſincerity. He loves his ſubjects, and reſpects the gods. He is warm in his friendſhips; and throughout he is high-ſpirited, gallant, and honorable.

Homer's gods make a great figure; but his machinery was not his own invention. He followed the traditions of his country. But, though his machinery is often lofty and magnificent; yet his gods are often deficient in dignity. They have all the human paſſions; they drink, and feaſt, and are vulnerable, like men. While, however, he at times degrades his divinities, he knows how to make them appear with moſt awful majeſty. Jupiter for the moſt part is introduced with great dignity; and ſeveral of the moſt ſublime concep-

tions in the Iliad are founded on the appearances of Neptune, Minerva, and Apollo.

The ſtyle of Homer is eaſy, natural, and highly animated. Of all the great poets he is the moſt ſimple in his ſtyle, and reſembles moſt the ſtyle of the poetical parts of the Old Teſtament. Pope's tranſlation of him affords no idea of his manner. His verſification however is allowed to be uncommonly melodious; and to carry beyond that of any poet reſemblance of ſound to ſenſe.

In narration Homer is always conciſe and deſcriptive. He paints his objects in a manner to our ſight. His battles are ſingularly admirable. We ſee them in all their hurry, terror, and confuſion. In ſimilies no poet abounds ſo much. His compariſons however, taken in general, are not his greateſt beauties; they come upon us in too quick ſucceſſion; and often diſturb his narration or deſcription. His lions, bulls, eagles, and herds of ſheep, recur too frequently.

The criticiſm of Longinus upon the Odyſſey is not without foundation; that in this poem Homer may be likened to the ſitting ſun, whoſe grandeur remains without the heat of his meridian beams. It wants the vigor and ſublimity of the Iliad; yet poſſeſſes ſo many beauties, as to be juſtly entitled to high praiſe. It is a very amuſing poem, and has much greater variety, than the Iliad. It contains many intereſting ſtories,

and pleasing pictures of antient manners. Instead of the ferocity, which pervades the Iliad, it presents us most amiable images of humanity and hospitality. It entertains us with many a wonderful adventure, and many a landscape of nature; and instructs us by a rich vein of morality and virtue, running through every part of the poem.

There are some defects however in the Odyssey. Many of its scenes fall below the majesty of an epic poem. The last twelve books are in many places languid and tedious; and perhaps the poet is not happy in the discovery of Ulysses to Penelope. She is too cautious and distrustful; and we meet not that joyous surprise, expected on such an occasion.

The ÆNEID of VIRGIL.

THE distinguishing excellencies of the Æneid are elegance and tenderness. Virgil is less animated and less sublime, than Homer; but he has fewer negligencies, greater variety, and more dignity. The Æneid has all the correctness and improvements of the Augustan age. We meet no contention of heroes about a female slave; no violent scolding, nor abusive language; but the poem opens with the utmost magnificence.

The ſubject of the Æneid, which is the eſtabliſhment of Æneas in Italy, is extremely happy. Nothing could be more intereſting to the Romans, than Virgil's deriving their origin from ſo famous a hero, as Æneas. The object was ſplendid itſelf; it gave the poet a theme, taken from the traditionary hiſtory of his country; it allowed him to adopt Homer's mythology; and afforded him frequent opportunities of glancing at all the future great exploits of the Romans, and of deſcribing Italy in its antient and fabulous ſtate.

Unity of action is perfectly preſerved in the Æneid. The ſettlement of Æneas in Italy by order of the gods is conſtantly kept in view. The epiſodes are properly linked to the main ſubject; and the nodus or intrigue of the poem is happily formed. The wrath of Juno, who oppoſes Æneas, gives riſe to all his difficulties, and connects the human with the celeſtial operations through the whole poem.

Great art and judgment are diſplayed in the Æneid; but even Virgil is not without his faults. One is, that he has ſo few marked characters. Achates, Cloanthes, Gyas, and other Trojan heroes, who accompanied Æneas into Italy, are undiſtinguiſhed figures. Even Æneas himſelf is not a very intereſting hero. He is deſcribed indeed, as pious and brave; but his character is not marked by thoſe ſtrokes, that touch the heart. The character of Dido is the beſt ſupported in the whole Æneid. Her warmth of paſſion, keenneſs of re-

ſentment, and violence of character exhibit a more animated figure, than any other, Virgil has drawn.

The management of the ſubject alſo is in ſome reſpects exceptionable. The ſix laſt books received not the finiſhing hand of the author; and for this reaſon he ordered his poem to be committed to the flames. The wars with the Latins are in dignity inferior to the more intereſting objects, previouſly preſented to us; and the reader is tempted to take part with Turnus againſt Æneas.

The principal excellency of Virgil, and what he poſſeſſes beyond all poets, is tenderneſs. His ſoul was full of ſenſibility. He felt himſelf all the affecting circumſtances in the ſcenes, he deſcribes; and knew how by a ſingle ſtroke to reach the heart. In an epic poem this merit is next to ſublimity. The ſecond book of the Æneid is one of the greateſt maſterpieces, ever executed. The death of old Priam, and the family pieces of Æneas, Anchiſes, and Creuſa, are as tender, as can be conceived. In the fourth book the unhappy paſſion and death of Dido are admirable. The interview of Æneas with Andromache and Helenus in the third book; the epiſodes of Pallas and Evander, of Niſus and Euryalus, of Lauſus and Mezentius, are all ſtriking inſtances of the power of raiſing the tender emotions. The beſt and moſt finiſhed books are the firſt, ſecond, fourth, ſixth, ſeventh, eighth, and twelfth.

Virgil's battles are in fire and ſublimity far inferior to Homer's. But in one important epiſode, the deſcent into hell, he has outdone Homer in the Odyſſey by many degrees. There is nothing in all antiquity, equal in its kind to the ſixth book of the Æneid. The ſcenery, the objects, and the deſcription are great, ſolemn, and ſublime.

With regard to the comparative merit of theſe two great princes of epic poetry, it muſt be allowed, that Homer was the greater genius, and Virgil the more correct writer. Homer is more original, more bold, more ſublime, and more forcible. In judgment they are both eminent. Homer has all the Greek vivacity; Virgil all the Roman ſtatelineſs. The imagination of Homer is the moſt copious; that of Virgil the moſt correct. The ſtrength of the former lies in warming the fancy; that of the latter in touching the heart. Homer's ſtyle is more ſimple and animated; Virgil's more elegant and uniform.

LUCAN's PHARSALIA.

LUCAN is inferior to Homer and Virgil; yet he deſerves attention. There is little invention in his Pharſalia; and it is conducted in too hiſtorical a manner to be ſtrictly epic. It may be arranged however in the epic claſs, as it treats of great and heroic adven-

tures. The ſubject of the Pharſalia has all the epic dignity and grandeur; and it poſſeſſes unity of object, viz. the triumph of Cæſar over Roman liberty.

But, though the ſubject of Lucan is confeſſedly heroic, it has two defects. Civil wars preſent objects too ſhocking for epic poetry, and furniſh odious and diſguſting views of human nature. But Lucan's genius ſeems to delight in ſavage ſcenes.

The other defect of Lucan's ſubject is, that it was too near the time, in which he lived. This deprived him of the aſſiſtance of fiction and machinery; and thereby rendered his work leſs ſplendid and amuſing. The facts, on which he founds his poem, were too well known, and too recent, to admit fables and the interpoſition of gods.

The characters of Lucan are drawn with ſpirit and force. But, though Pompey is his hero, he has not made him very intereſting. He marks not Pompey by any high diſtinction, either for magnanimity or valor. He is always ſurpaſſed by Cæſar. Cato is Lucan's favorite character; and, whenever he introduces him, he riſes above himſelf.

In managing his ſtory Lucan confines himſelf too much to chronological order. This breaks the thread of his narration, and hurries him from place to place. He is alſo too digreſſive; frequently quitting his ſub-

ject, to give us ſome geographical deſcription, or philoſophical diſquiſition.

There are ſeveral poetical and ſpirited deſcriptions in the Pharſalia; but the ſtrength of this poet does not lie either in narration or deſcription. His narration is often dry and harſh; his deſcriptions are often overwrought, and employed on diſagreeable objects. His chief merit conſiſts in his ſentiments; which are noble, ſtriking, glowing, and ardent. He is the moſt philoſophical, and the moſt patriotic poet of antiquity. He was a ſtoic; and the ſpirit of that philoſophy breathes through his poem. He is elevated and bold; and abounds in well timed exclamations and apoſtrophes.

As his vivacity and fire are great, he is apt to be carried away by them. His great defect is want of moderation. He knows not, where to ſtop. When he would aggrandize his objects, he becomes tumid and unnatural. There is much bombaſt in his poem. His taſte is marked with the corruption of his age; and inſtead of poetry he often exhibits declamation.

On the whole however he is an author of lively and original genius. His high ſentiments and his fire ſerve to atone for many of his defects. His genius had ſtrength, but no tenderneſs, nor amenity. Compared with Virgil, he has more fire and ſublimer ſentiments; but in every thing elſe falls infinitely below him, particularly in purity, elegance, and tenderneſs.

Statius and Silius Italicus, though poets of the epic claſs, are too inconſiderable for particular criticiſm.

TASSO's JERUSALEM.

JERUSALEM DELIVERED is a ſtrictly regular epic poem, and abounds with beauties. The ſubject is the recovery of Jeruſalem from Infidels by the united powers of Chriſtendom. The enterprize was ſplendid, venerable, and heroic; and an intereſting contraſt is exhibited between the Chriſtians and Saracens. Religion renders the ſubject auguſt, and opens a natural field for machinery and ſublime deſcription. The action too lies in a country, and in a period of time, ſufficiently remote, to admit an intermixture of fable with hiſtory.

Rich invention is a capital quality in Taſſo. He is full of events, finely diverſified. He never fatigues his reader by mere war and fighting. He frequently ſhifts the ſcene; and from camps and battles tranſports us to more pleaſing objects. Sometimes the ſolemnities of religion; ſometimes the intrigues of love; at other times the adventures of a journey, or the incidents of paſtoral life, relieve and entertain the reader. The work at the ſame time is artfully connected; and in the midſt of variety there is perfect unity of plan.

Many characters enliven the poem; and these distinctly marked and well supported. Godfrey, the leader of the enterprise, is prudent, moderate, and brave; Tancred amorous, generous, and gallant. Rinaldo, who is properly the hero of the poem, is passionate and resentful; but full of zeal, honor, and heroism. Solyman is highminded; Erminia tender; Armida artful and violent, and Clorinda masculine. In drawing characters Tasso is superior to Virgil, and yields to no poet, but Homer.

He abounds in machinery. When celestial beings interpose, his machinery is noble. But devils, enchanters, and conjurers act too great a part throughout his poem. In general the marvellous is carried to extravagance. The poet was too great an admirer of the romantic spirit of knight errantry.

In describing magnificent objects his style is firm and majestic. In gay and pleasing description it is soft and insinuating. Erminia's pastoral retreat in the seventh book, and the arts and beauty of Armida in the fourth book, are exquisitely beautiful. His battles are animated, and properly varied by incidents. It is rather by actions, characters, and descriptions, that he interests us, than by the sentimental part of his work. He is far inferior to Virgil in tenderness; and, when he aims at being sentimental and pathetic, he is apt to become artificial.

It has often been objected to Taſſo, that he abounds in point and conceit; but this cenſure has been carried too far. For in his general character he is maſculine and ſtrong. The humor of decrying him paſſed from the French critics to thoſe of England. But their ſtrictures are founded either in ignorance or prejudice. For the *Jeruſalem* is in my opinion the third regular epic poem in the world; and ſtands next to the Iliad and Æneid. In ſimplicity and fire Taſſo is inferior to Homer; in tenderneſs to Virgil; in ſublimity to Milton; but for fertility of invention, variety of incidents, expreſſion of characters, richneſs of deſcription, and beauty of ſtyle, no poet, except the three juſt named, can be compared to him.

THE LUSIAD OF CAMOENS.

THE Portugueſe boaſt of Camoens, as the Italians do of Taſſo. The diſcovery of the Eaſt Indies by Vaſco de Gama, an enterpriſe alike ſplendid and intereſting, is the ſubject of the poem of Camoens. The adventures, diſtreſſes, and actions of Vaſco and his countrymen, are well fancied and deſcribed; and the Luſiad is conducted on the epic plan. The incidents of the poem are magnificent; and, joined with ſome wildneſs and irregularity, there is diſplayed in it much poetic ſpirit, ſtrong fancy, and bold deſcription. In

the poem however there is no attempt toward painting characters. Vaſco is the hero, and the only perſonage, that makes any figure.

The machinery of the Luſiad is perfectly extravagant; being formed of an odd mixture of Chriſtian ideas and Pagan mythology. Pagan divinities appear to be the deities; and Chriſt and the Holy Virgin to be inferior agents. One great object however of the Portugueſe expedition is to extend the empire of Chriſtianity, and to extirpate Mahometaniſm. In this religious undertaking the chief protector of the Portugueſe is Venus, and their great adverſary is Bacchus. Jupiter is introduced, as foretelling the downfal of Mahomet. Vaſco during a ſtorm implores the aid of Chriſt and the Virgin; and in return to this prayer Venus appears, and, diſcovering the ſtorm to be the work of Bacchus, complains to Jupiter, and procures the winds to be calmed. All this is moſt prepoſterous; but toward the end of his work the poet offers an awkward apology for his mythology; making the goddeſs Thetis inform Vaſco that ſhe and the other heathen divinities are no more, than names to deſcribe the operations of Providence.

In the Luſiad however there is ſome fine machinery of a different kind. The appearance of the genius of the river Ganges in a dream to Emanuel, king of Portugal, inviting him to diſcover his ſecret ſprings, and acquainting him, that he was the monarch, deſtin-

ed to enjoy the treaſures of the Eaſt, is a happy idea. But in the fifth canto the poet diſplays his nobleſt conception of this ſort, where Vaſco recounts to the king of Melinda all the wonders of his voyage. He tells him that, when the fleet arrived at the Cape of Good Hope, which never had been doubled before by any navigator, there appeared to them ſuddenly a huge phantom, riſing out of the ſea in the midſt of tempeſt and thunder, with a head, that reached the clouds, and a countenance, that filled them with terror. This was the genius of that hitherto unknown ocean; and he menaced them in a voice of thunder for invading thoſe unknown ſeas; foretelling the calamities, that were to befal them, if they ſhould proceed; and then with a mighty noiſe diſappeared. This is a very ſolemn and ſtriking piece of machinery; and ſhows that Camoens was a poet of a bold and lofty imagination.

THE TELEMACHUS OF FENELON.

IT would be unpardonable in a review of epic poets to forget the amiable Fenelon. His work, though in proſe, is a poem; and the plan in general is well contrived, having epic grandeur and unity of action. He employs the antient mythology; and excels in application of it. There is great richneſs as well, as beauty, in his deſcriptions. To ſoft and calm ſcenes his genius

is more peculiarly ſuited; ſuch, as the incidents of paſtoral life, the pleaſures of virtue, or a country flouriſhing in peace.

His firſt books are eminently excellent. The adventures of Calypſo are the chief beauty of his work. Vivacity and intereſt join in the narration. In the books, which follow, there is leſs happineſs in the execution, and an apparent languor. The author in warlike adventures is moſt unfortunate.

Some critics have refuſed to rank this work among epic poems. Their objection ariſes from the minute details it exhibits of virtuous policy, and from the diſcourſes of Mentor, which recur too frequently, and too much in the ſtrain of commonplace morality. To theſe peculiarities however the author was led by the deſign, with which he wrote, that of forming a young prince to the cares and duties of a virtuous monarch.

Several epic poets have deſcribed a deſcent into hell; and in the proſpects, they have given us of the inviſible world, we may obſerve the gradual refinement in the opinions of men concerning a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. Homer's deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell is indiſtinct and dreary. The ſcene is in the country of the Cimmerians, which is always covered with clouds and darkneſs; and, when the ſpirits of the dead appear, we hardly know whether Ulyſſes is above or below ground. The ghoſts too, even of the heroes, appear diſſatisfied with their condition.

In Virgil the deſcent into hell diſcovers great refinement, correſponding to the progreſs of philoſophy. The objects are more diſtinct, grand, and awful. There is a fine deſcription of the ſeparate manſions of good and bad ſpirits. Fenelon's viſit of Telemachus to the ſhades is ſtill much more philoſophical than Virgil's. He refines the antient mythology by his knowledge of the true religion, and adorns it with that beautiful enthuſiaſm, for which he is ſo remarkable. His relation of the happineſs of the juſt is an excellent deſcription in the myſtic ſtrain.

THE HENRIADE OF VOLTAIRE.

THE Henriade is without doubt a regular epic poem. In ſeveral places of this work Voltaire diſcovers that boldneſs of conception, that vivacity and livelineſs of expreſſion, by which he is ſo much diſtinguiſhed. Several of his compariſons are new and happy. But the Henriade is not his maſterpiece. In the tragic line he has certainly been more ſucceſsful, than in the epic. French verſification is ill ſuited to epic poetry. It is not only fettered by rhyme, but wants elevation. Hence not only feebleneſs, but ſometimes proſaic flatneſs in the ſtyle. The poem conſequently languiſhes; and the reader is not animated by that ſpirit, which is inſpired by a ſublime compoſition of the epic kind.

The triumph of Henry IV. over the arms of the League is the ſubject of the Henriade. The action of the poem properly includes only the ſiege of Paris. It is an action perfectly epic; and conducted with due regard to unity, and to the rules of critics. But it has great defects. It is founded on civil wars; and preſents to the mind thoſe odious objects, maſſacres and aſſaſſinations. It is alſo of too recent date, and too much within the bounds of well known hiſtory. The author has farther erred by mixing fiction with truth. The poem, for inſtance, opens with a voyage of Henry's to England, and an interview between him and Queen Elizabeth; though Henry never ſaw England, nor ever converſed with Elizabeth. In ſubjects of ſuch notoriety a fiction of this kind ſhocks every intelligent reader.

A great deal of machinery is employed by Voltaire for the purpoſe of embelliſhing his poem. But it is of the worſt kind, that of allegorical beings. Diſcord, Cunning, and Love appear, as perſonages, and mix with human actors. This is contrary to all rational criticiſm. Ghoſts, angels, and devils have a popular exiſtence; but every one knows that allegorical beings are no more, than repreſentations of human paſſions and diſpoſitions; and ought not to have place, as actors, in a poem, which relates to human tranſactions.

In juſtice however it muſt be obſerved, that the machinery of St. Louis poſſeſſes real dignity. The proſ-

peft of the invifible world, which St. Louis gives to Henry in a dream, is the fineft paſſage in the Henriadē. Death bringing the ſouls of the departed in ſucceſſion before God, and the palace of the Deſtinies opened to Henry, are ſtriking and magnificent objects.

Though ſome of Voltaire's epiſodes are properly extended, his narration is too general. The events are ſuperficially related, and too much crowded. The ſtrain of ſentiment however, which pervades the Henriade, is high and noble.

MILTON's PARADISE LOST.

MILTON chalked out a new and very extraordinary courſe. As ſoon, as we open his Paradiſe Loſt, we are introduced into an inviſible world, and ſurrounded by celeſtial and infernal beings. Angels and devils are not his machinery, but his principal actors. What in any other work would be the marvelous, is in this the natural courſe of events; and doubts may ariſe, whether his poem be ſtrictly an epic compoſition. But, whether it be ſo or not, it is certainly one of the higheſt efforts of poetical genius; and in one great characteriſtic of epic poetry, majeſty and ſublimity, is equal to any, that bears this name.

The ſubject of his poem led Milton upon difficult ground. If it had been more human and leſs theologi-

cal; if his occurrences had been more connected with real life; if he had afforded a greater diſplay of the characters and paſſions of men; his poem would have been more pleaſing to moſt readers. His ſubject however was peculiarly ſuited to the daring ſublimity of his genius. As he alone was fitted for it; ſo he has ſhown in the conduct of it a wonderful ſtretch of imagination and invention. From a few hints, given in the ſacred Scriptures, he has raiſed a regular ſtructure, and filled his poem with a variety of incidents. He is ſometimes dry and harſh; and too often the metaphyſician and divine. But the general tenor of his work is intereſting, elevated, and affecting. The artful change of his objects, and the ſcene, laid now in heaven, now on earth, and now in hell, afford ſufficient diverſity; while unity of plan is perfectly ſupported. Calm ſcenes are exhibited in the employments of Adam and Eve in Paradiſe; and buſy ſcenes, and great actions, in the enterpriſes of Satan, and in the wars of Angels. The amiable innocence of our firſt parents and the proud ambition of Satan afford a happy contraſt through the whole poem, which gives it an uncommon charm. But the concluſion perhaps is too tragic for epic poetry.

The ſubject naturally admits no great diſplay of characters; but ſuch, as could be introduced, are properly ſupported. Satan makes a ſtriking figure; and is the beſt drawn character in the poem. Milton has

artfully given him a mixed character, not altogether void of ſome good qualities. He is brave, and faithful to his troops. Amid his impiety he is not without remorſe. He is even touched with pity for our firſt parents; and from the neceſſity of his ſituation juſtifies his deſign againſt them. He is actuated by ambition and reſentment rather, than by pure malice. The characters of Beelzebub, Moloch, and Belial, are well painted. The good angels, though deſcribed with dignity, have more uniformity of character. Among them however the mild condeſcenſion of Raphael and the tried fidelity of Abdiel form proper characteriſtic diſtinctions. The attempt to deſcribe God Almighty himſelf was too bold, and accordingly moſt unſucceſsful. The innocence of our Firſt Parents is delicately painted. In ſome ſpeeches perhaps Adam appears too knowing and refined for his ſituation. Eve is hit off more happily. Her gentleneſs, modeſty, and frailty are expreſſively characteriſtic of the female character.

Milton's great and diſtinguiſhing excellence is his ſublimity. In this perhaps he excels even Homer. The firſt and ſecond books of Paradiſe Loſt are almoſt a continued ſeries of the higheſt ſublime. But his ſublimity differs from that of Homer; which is always accompanied by impetuoſity and fire. The ſublime of Milton is a calm and amazing grandeur. Homer warms and hurries us along; Milton fixes us in a ſtate of elevation and aſtoniſhment. Homer's ſublimity ap-

pears moſt in his deſcription of actions; Milton's in that of wonderful and ſtupendous objects.

But, while Milton excels moſt in ſublimity, his work abounds in the beautiful, the pleaſing, and the tender. When the ſcene is in Paradiſe, the imagery is gay and ſmiling. His deſcriptions ſhow a fertile imagination; and in his ſimilies he is remarkably happy. If faulty, it is from their too frequent alluſions to matters of learning, and to antient fables. It muſt alſo be confeſſed, that there is a falling off in the latter part of Paradiſe Loſt.

The language and verſification of Milton have high merit. His blank verſe is harmonious and diverſified; and his ſtyle is full of majeſty. There may be found indeed ſome proſaic lines in his poem. But in a work ſo long and ſo harmonious theſe may be forgiven.

Paradiſe Loſt amid beauties of every kind has many inequalities. No high and daring genius was ever uniformly correct. Milton is too frequently theological and metaphyſical; his words are often technical; and he is affectedly oſtentatious of his learning. Many of his faults however are to be imputed to the pedantry of his age. He diſcovers a vigor, a graſp of genius, equal to every thing great; ſometimes he riſes above every other poet; and ſometimes he falls below himſelf.

DRAMATIC POETRY.

TRAGEDY.

IN all civilized nations dramatic poetry has been a favorite amuſement. It divides itſelf into the two forms of Tragedy and Comedy. Of theſe tragedy is the moſt dignified; as great and ſerious objects intereſt us more, than little and ludicrous ones. The former reſts on the high paſſions, the virtues, crimes, and ſufferings of mankind; the latter on their humors, follies, and pleaſures; and ridicule is its ſole inſtrument.

Tragedy is a direct imitation of human manners and actions. It does not, like an epic poem, exhibit characters by deſcription or narration; it ſets the perſonages before us, and makes them act and ſpeak with propriety. This ſpecies of writing therefore requires deep knowledge of the human heart; and, when happily executed, it has the power of raiſing the ſtrongeſt emotions.

In its general ſtrain and ſpirit tragedy is favorable to virtue. Characters of honor claim our reſpect and approbation; and, to raiſe indignation, we muſt paint a perſon in the odious colors of vice and depravity. Virtuous men indeed are often repreſented by the tragic poet, as unfortunate; for this happens in real

life. But he always engages our hearts in their behalf; and never repreſents vice, as finally triumphant and happy. Upon the ſame principle, if bad men ſucceed in their deſigns, they are yet finally conducted to puniſhment. It may therefore be concluded, that tragedies are moral compoſitions.

It is affirmed by Ariſtotle, that the deſign of tragedy is to purge our paſſions by means of pity and terror. But perhaps it would have been more accurate, to have ſaid that the object of this ſpecies of compoſition is to improve our virtuous ſenſibility. If a writer excite our pity for the afflicted, inſpire us with proper ſentiments on beholding the viciſſitudes of life, and ſtimulate us to avoid the misfortunes of others by exhibiting their errors; he has accompliſhed all the moral purpoſes of tragedy.

In a tragedy it is neceſſary to have an intereſting ſtory, and that the writer conduct it in a natural and probable manner. For the end of tragedy is not ſo much to elevate the imagination, as to affect the heart. This principle, which is founded on the cleareſt reaſon, excludes from tragedy all machinery, or fabulous intervention of gods. Ghoſts alone from their foundation in popular belief have maintained their place in tragedy.

To promote an impreſſion of probability, the ſtory of a tragedy according to ſome critics ſhould never be

a pure fiction, but ought to be built on real facts. This however is carrying the matter too far. For a fictitious tale, if properly conducted, will melt the heart as much, as real hiſtory. Hence the tragic poet mixes many fictitious circumſtances with well known facts. Moſt readers never think of ſeparating the hiſtorical from the fabulous. They attend only to what is probable, and are touched by events, that reſemble nature. Accordingly ſome of the moſt affecting tragedies are entirely fictitious in their ſubjects. Such are the Fair Penitent, Douglas, and the Orphan.

In its origin tragedy was rude and imperfect. Among the Greeks it was at firſt nothing more, than the ſong, which was ſung at the feſtival of Bacchus. Theſe ſongs were ſometimes ſung by the whole company, and ſometimes by ſeparate bands, anſwering alternately to each other, and making a chorus. To give this entertainment ſome variety, Theſpis, who lived about five hundred years before the Chriſtian æra, introduced a perſon between the ſongs, who made a recitation in verſe. Æſchylus, who lived fifty years after him, introduced a dialogue between two perſons or actors, comprehending ſome intereſting ſtory; and placed them on a ſtage, adorned with ſcenery. The drama now began to aſſume a regular form; and was ſoon after brought to perfection by Sophocles and Euripides.

It thus appears that the chorus was the foundation of tragedy. But, what is remarkable, the dramatic di-

alogue, which was only an addition to it, at length became the principal part of the entertainment; and the chorus, loſing its dignity, came to be accounted only an acceſſory in tragedy. At laſt in modern tragedy it has entirely diſappeared; and its abſence from the ſtage forms the chief diſtinction between the antient and modern drama.

The chorus, it muſt be allowed, rendered tragedy more magnificent, inſtructive, and moral. But on the other hand it was unnatural, and leſſened the intereſt of the piece. It removed the repreſentation from the reſemblance of life. It has accordingly been with propriety excluded from the ſtage.

The three unities of action, place, and time, have been conſidered, as eſſential to the proper conduct of dramatic fable. Of theſe three unity of action is undoubtedly moſt important. This conſiſts in the relation, which all the incidents introduced bear to ſome deſign or effect, combining them naturally into one whole. This unity of ſubject is moſt eſſential to tragedy. For a multiplicity of plots by diſtracting the attention prevents the paſſions from riſing to any height. Hence the abſurdity of two independent actions in the ſame play. There may indeed be underplots; but the poet ſhould make theſe ſubſervient to the main action. They ſhould conſpire to bring forward the cataſtrophe of the play.

Of a ſeparate and independent action or intrigue there is a clear example in Addiſon's Cato. The ſubject of this tragedy is the death of Cato, a noble perſonage, and ſupported by the author with much dignity. But all the love ſcenes in the play; the paſſion of Cato's two ſons for Lucia, and that of Juba for Cato's daughter, are mere epiſodes. They break the unity of the ſubject; and form a very unſeaſonable junction of gallantry with high ſentiments of patriotiſm.

Unity of action muſt not however be confounded with ſimplicity of plot. Unity and ſimplicity import different things in dramatic compoſition. The plot is ſimple, when a ſmall number of incidents is introduced into it. With reſpect to plots the antients were more ſimple, than the moderns. The Greek tragedies appear indeed to be too naked, and deſtitute of intereſting events. The moderns admit a much greater variety of incidents; which is certainly an improvement, as it renders the entertainment more animated and more inſtructive. It may however be carried too far; for an overcharge of action and intrigue produces perplexity and embarraſſment. Of this the Mourning Bride of Congreve is an example. The incidents ſucceed each other too rapidly; and the cataſtrophe, which ought to be plain and ſimple, is artificial and intricate.

Unity of action muſt be maintained not only in the general conſtruction of the fable, but in all the acts and ſcenes of the play. The diviſion of every play into five

acts is founded merely on common practice, and the authority of Horace;

Neve minor, neu ſit quinto productior actu
Fabula.

There is nothing in nature, which fixes this rule. On the Greek ſtage the diviſion by acts was unknown. The word act never occurs once in the Poetics of Ariſtotle. Practice however has eſtabliſhed this diviſion; and the poet muſt be careful, that each act terminate in a proper place. The firſt act ſhould contain a clear expoſition of the ſubject. It ſhould excite curioſity, and introduce the perſonages to the acquaintance of the ſpectators. During the ſecond, third, and fourth acts, the plot ſhould gradually thicken. The paſſions ſhould be kept conſtantly awake. There ſhould be no ſcenes of idle converſation, or mere declamation. The ſuſpenſe and concern of the ſpectators ſhould be excited more and more. This is the great excellency of Shakeſpeare. Sentiment, paſſion, pity, and terror ſhould pervade every tragedy.

In the fifth act, which is the ſeat of the cataſtrophe, the author ſhould moſt fully diſplay his art and genius. The firſt requiſite is, that the unravelling of the plot be brought about by probable and natural means. Secondly, the cataſtrophe ſhould be ſimple, depending on few events, and including but few perſons. Paſſionate ſenſibility languiſhes, when divided among many objects.

Laſtly, in the cataſtrophe every thing ſhould be warm and glowing; and the poet muſt be ſimple, ſerious, and pathetic; uſing no language, but that of nature.

It is not eſſential to the cataſtrophe of a tragedy, that it end happily. Sufficient diſtreſs and agitation with many tender emotions may be raiſed in the courſe of the play. But in general the ſpirit of tragedy leans to the ſide of leaving the impreſſion of virtuous ſorrow ſtrong upon the mind.

A curious queſtion here occurs; how happens it, that the emotions of ſorrow in tragedy afford gratification to the mind? It ſeems to be the conſtitution of our nature, that all the ſocial paſſions ſhould be attended with pleaſure. Hence nothing is more pleaſing, than love and friendſhip. Pity is for wiſe ends a ſtrong inſtinct; and it neceſſarily produces ſome diſtreſs on account of its ſympathy with ſufferers. The heart is at the ſame moment warmed by kindneſs, and afflicted by diſtreſs. Upon the whole the ſtate of the mind is agreeable. We are pleaſed with ourſelves, not only for our benevolence, but for our ſenſibility. The pain of ſympathy is alſo diminiſhed by recollecting that the diſtreſs is not real; and by the power of action and ſentiment, of language and poetry.

After treating of the acts of a play it is proper to notice the ſcenes. The entrance of a new perſon upon the ſtage forms, what is called a new ſcene. Theſe

ſcenes, or ſucceſſive converſations, ſhould be cloſely connected; and much of the art of dramatic compoſition conſiſts in maintaining this connexion. For this purpoſe two rules muſt be obſerved. 1. During the courſe of one act the ſtage ſhould never be left empty a moment, for this would make a gap in the repreſentation. Whenever the ſtage is evacuated, the act is cloſed. This rule is generally obſerved by French tragedians; but it is much neglected by the Engliſh. 2. No perſon ſhould come upon the ſtage, or leave it, without ſome apparent reaſon. If this rule be neglected, the dramatis perſonæ are little better, than ſo many puppets; for the drama profeſſes imitation of real tranſactions.

To unity of action critics have added the unities of time and place. Unity of place requires the ſcene never to be ſhifted; that the action of the play continue in the ſame place, where it began. Unity of time, ſtrictly taken, requires that the time of the action be no longer, than the time, allowed for the repreſentation of the play. Ariſtotle however permits the action to comprehend a whole day. Theſe rules are intended to bring the imitation nearer to reality.

Among the Greeks there was no diviſion of acts. In modern times the practice has prevailed of ſuſpending the ſpectacle ſome little time between the acts. This practice gives latitude to the imagination, and renders ſtrict confinement to time and place leſs neceſ-

fary. Upon this account therefore too ſtrict an obſervance of theſe unities ſhould not be preferred to higher beauties of execution, nor to the introduction of more pathetic ſituations. But tranſgreſſions of theſe unities, though they may be often advantageous, ought not to be too frequent, nor violent. Hurrying the ſpectator from one diſtant city to another, or making ſeveral days or weeks paſs during the repreſentation, would ſhock the imagination too much, and therefore cannot be allowed in a dramatic writer.

Having examined dramatic action, we ſhall now attend to the characters, moſt proper to be exhibited in a tragedy. Several critics affirm that the nature of tragedy requires the principal perſonages to be always of high or princely rank; as the ſufferings of ſuch perſons ſeize the heart the moſt forcibly. But this is more ſpecious, than ſolid. For the diſtreſſes of Deſdemona, Monimia, and Belvidera, intereſt us as much, as if they had been princeſſes or queens. It is ſufficient, that in tragedy there be nothing degrading or mean in the perſonages exhibited. High rank may render the ſpectacle more ſplendid; but it is the tale itſelf, and the art of the poet, that make it intereſting and pathetic.

In deſcribing his characters the poet ſhould be careful ſo to order the incidents, which relate to them, as to impreſs the ſpectators with favorable ideas of virtue, and of the Divine adminiſtration. Pity ſhould be raiſed for the virtuous in diſtreſs; and the author ſhould

ſtudiouſly beware of making ſuch repreſentations of life, as would render virtue an object of averſion.

Unmixed characters, either of good or ill men, are not in the opinion of Ariſtotle fit for tragedy. For the diſtreſſes of the former, as unmerited, hurt us; and the ſufferings of the latter excite no compaſſion. Mixed characters afford the beſt field for diſplaying, without injury to morals, the viciſſitudes of life. They intereſt us the moſt deeply; and their diſtreſſes are moſt inſtructive, when repreſented, as ſpringing out of their own paſſions, or as originating in ſome weakneſs, incident to human nature.

The Greek tragedies are often founded on mere deſtiny and inevitable misfortunes. Modern tragedy aims at a higher object, and takes a wider range; as it ſhows the direful effects of ambition, jealouſy, love, reſentment, and of every ſtrong emotion. But of all the paſſions, which furniſh matter for tragedy, love has moſt occupied the modern ſtage. To the antient theatre love was almoſt unknown. This proceeded from the national manners of the Greeks, which encouraged a greater ſeparation of the ſexes, than takes place in modern times; and did not admit female actors upon the antient ſtage; a circumſtance, which operated againſt the introduction of love ſtories. No ſolid reaſon however can be aſſigned for this predominancy of love upon the ſtage. Indeed it not only limits the natural extent of tragedy, but degrades its majeſty. Mixing

it with the great and solemn revolutions of human fortune tends to give tragedy the air of gallantry and juvenile entertainment. Without any assistance from love the drama is capable of producing its highest effects upon the mind.

Beside the arrangement of his subject, and the conduct of his personages, the tragic poet must attend to the propriety of his sentiments. These must be suited to the characters of the persons, to whom they are attributed, and to the situations, in which they are placed. It is chiefly in the pathetic parts, that the difficulty and importance of this rule are greatest. We go to a tragedy, expecting to be moved; and, if the poet cannot reach the heart, he has no tragic merit; and we return cold and disappointed from the performance.

To paint and to excite passion strongly are prerogatives of genius. They require not only ardent sensibility, but the power of entering deeply into characters. It is here, that candidates for the drama are least successful. A man under the agitation of passion makes known his feelings in the glowing language of sensibility. He does not coolly describe, what his feelings are; yet this sort of secondary description tragic poets often give us instead of the primary and native language of passion. Thus in Addison's Cato, when Lucia confesses to Portius her love for him, but swears that she will never marry him; Portius instead of giv-

ing way to the language of grief and aſtoniſhment only deſcribes his feelings;

> Fix'd in aſtoniſhment, I gaze upon thee,
> Like one juſt blaſted by a ſtroke from heaven,
> Who pants for breath, and ſtiffens yet alive
> In dreadful looks; a monument of wrath.

This might have proceeded from a byſtander, or an indifferent perſon; but it is altogether improper in the mouth of Portius. Similar to this deſcriptive language are the unnatural and forced thoughts, which tragic poets ſometimes employ, to exaggerate the feelings of perſons, whom they wiſh to paint, as ſtrongly moved. Thus, when Jane Shore on meeting her huſband in diſtreſs, and finding that he had forgiven her, calls on the rains to give her their drops, and to the ſprings to lend her their ſtreams, that ſhe may have a conſtant ſupply of tears; we ſee plainly that it is not Jane Shore, that ſpeaks; but the poet himſelf, who is ſtraining his fancy, and ſpurring up his genius, to ſay ſomething uncommonly ſtrong and lively.

The language of real paſſion is always plain and ſimple. It abounds indeed in figures, that expreſs a diſturbed and impetuous ſtate of mind; but never employs any for parade and embelliſhment. Thoughts, ſuggeſted by paſſion, are natural and obvious; and not the offspring of refinement, ſubtilty, and wit. Paſſion neither reaſons, ſpeculates, nor declaims; its language is ſhort, broken, and interrupted. The French

tragedians deal too much in refinement and declamation. The Greek tragedians adhere moſt to nature, and are moſt pathetic. This too is the great excellency of Shakeſpeare. He exhibits the true language of nature and paſſion.

Moral ſentiments and reflexions ought not to recur very frequently in tragedy. When unſeaſonably crowded, they loſe their effect, and convey an air of pedantry. When introduced with propriety, they give dignity to the compoſition. Cardinal Wolſey's ſoliloquy on his fall is a fine inſtance of the felicity, with which they may be employed. Much of the merit of Addiſon's Cato depends on that moral turn of thought, which diſtinguiſhes it.

The ſtyle and verſification of tragedy ſhould be free, eaſy, and varied. Engliſh blank verſe is happily ſuited to this ſpecies of compoſition. It has ſufficient majeſty, and can deſcend to the ſimple and familiar; it admits a happy variety of cadence, and is free from the conſtraint and monotony of rhyme. Of the French tragedies it is a great misfortune, that they are always in rhyme. For it fetters the freedom of the tragic dialogue, fills it with a languid monotony, and is fatal to the power of paſſion.

With regard to thoſe ſplendid compariſons in rhyme, and thoſe ſtrings of couplets, with which it was ſome time ago faſhionable to conclude the acts of a tragedy,

and sometimes the most interesting scenes, they are now laid aside, and regarded not only, as childish ornaments, but as perfect barbarisms.

GREEK TRAGEDY.

THE plot of Greek tragedy was exceedingly simple; the incidents few; and the conduct very exact with regard to the unities of action, time, and place. Machinery, or the intervention of gods, was employed; and, what was very faulty, the final unravelling was sometimes made to turn upon it. Love, one or two instances excepted, was never admitted into Greek tragedy. A vein of morality and religion always runs through it; but they employed less, than the moderns, the combat of the passions. Their plots were all taken from the antient traditionary stories of their own nation.

Æschylus, the father of Greek tragedy, exhibits both the beauties and defects of an early original writer. He is bold, nervous, and animated; but very obscure, and difficult to be understood. His style is highly metaphorical, and often harsh and turnid. He abounds in martial ideas and descriptions, has much fire and elevation, and little tenderness. He also delights in the marvellous.

The most masterly of the Greek tragedians is Sophocles. He is the most correct in the conduct of his

ſubjects; the moſt juſt and ſublime in his ſentiments. In deſcriptive talents he is alſo eminent. Euripides is accounted more tender, than Sophocles; he is fuller of moral ſentiments; but he is leſs correct in the conduct of his plays. His expoſitions of his ſubjects are leſs artful; and the ſongs of his chorus, though very poetic, are leſs connected with the principal action, than thoſe of Sophocles. Both of them however have high merit, as tragic poets. Their ſtyle is elegant and beautiful; and their ſentiments for the moſt part juſt. They ſpeak with the voice of nature; and in the midſt of ſimplicity they are touching and intereſting.

Theatrical repreſentation on the ſtages of Greece and Rome was in many reſpects very ſingular, and widely different from that of modern times. The ſongs of the chorus were accompanied by inſtrumental muſic; and the dialogue part had a modulation of its own, and might be ſet to notes. It has alſo been thought, that on the Roman ſtage the pronouncing and geſticulating parts were ſometimes divided, and performed by different actors. The actors in tragedy wore a long robe; they were raiſed upon cothurni, and played in maſks. Theſe maſks were painted; and the actor by turning the different profiles exhibited different emotions to the auditors. This contrivance however was attended by many diſadvantages.

FRENCH TRAGEDY.

IN the compoſitions of ſome French dramatic writers tragedy has appeared with great luſtre; particularly Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire. They have improved upon the antients by introducing more incidents, a greater variety of paſſions, and a fuller diſplay of characters. Like the antients, they excel in regularity of conduct; and their ſtyle is poetical and elegant. But to an Engliſh taſte they want ſtrength and paſſion, and are too declamatory and refined. They ſeem afraid of being too tragic; and it was the opinion of Voltaire, that to the perfection of tragedy it is neceſſary to unite the vehemence and action of the Engliſh theatre with the correctneſs and decorum of the French.

Corneille, the father of French tragedy, is diſtinguiſhed by majeſty of ſentiment and a fruitful imagination. His genius was rich, but more turned to the epic, than the tragic vein. He is magnificent and ſplendid rather, than touching and tender. He is full of declamation, impetuous, and extravagant.

In tragedy Racine is ſuperior to Corneille. He wants indeed the copiouſneſs of Corneille; but he is free from his bombaſt, and excels him greatly in tenderneſs. The beauty of his language and verſification is uncommon; and he has managed his rhymes with ſuperior advantage.

Voltaire is not inferior to his predeceſſors in the drama; and in one article he has outdone them, the delicate and intereſting ſituations, he has introduced. Here lies his chief ſtrength. Like his predeceſſors, however, he is ſometimes deficient in force, and ſometimes too declamatory. His characters, notwithſtanding, are drawn with ſpirit, his events are ſtriking, and his ſentiments elevated.

ENGLISH TRAGEDY.

IT has often been remarked of tragedy in Great Britain, that it is more ardent, than that of France, but more irregular and incorrect. It has therefore excelled in the ſoul of tragedy. For the pathetic muſt be allowed to be the chief excellence of the tragic muſe.

The firſt object on the Engliſh theatre is the great Shakeſpeare. In extent and force of genius, both for tragedy and comedy, he is unrivalled. But at the ſame time it is genius ſhooting wild, deficient in taſte, not always chaſte, and unaſſiſted by art and knowledge. Criticiſm has been exhauſted in commentaries upon him; yet to this day it is undecided, whether his beauties or defects be greateſt. In his writings there are admirable ſcenes and paſſages without number; but there is not one of his plays, which can be pronounced

a good one. Beſide extreme irregularities in conduct, and groteſque mixtures of the ſerious and comic, we are frequently diſturbed by unnatural thoughts, harſh expreſſions, and a certain obſcure bombaſt, and play upon words. Theſe faults are however compenſated by two of the greateſt excellencies, a tragic poet can poſſeſs, his lively and diverſified painting of character, and his ſtrong and natural expreſſions of paſſion. On theſe two virtues his merit reſts. In the midſt of his abſurdities he intereſts and moves us; ſo great is his ſkill in human nature, and ſo lively his repreſentations of it.

He poſſeſſes alſo the merit of having created for himſelf a world of preternatural beings. His witches, ghoſts, fairies, and ſpirits of all kinds, are ſo awful, myſterious, and peculiar, as ſtrongly to affect the imagination. His two maſterpieces are his Othello and Macbeth. With regard to his hiſtorical plays they are neither tragedies, nor comedies; but a peculiar ſpecies of dramatic entertainment, in which he deſcribes the characters, events, and manners of the times, of which he treats.

Since Shakeſpeare there are few Engliſh dramatic writers, whoſe whole works are entitled to high praiſe. There are ſeveral tragedies however of conſiderable merit. Lee's Theodoſius has warmth and tenderneſs, though romantic in the plan, and extravagant in the ſentiments. Otway is great in his Orphan and Venice

Preſerved. Perhaps however he is too tragic in theſe pieces. He had genius and ſtrong paſſions, but was very indelicate.

The tragedies of Rowe abound in morality and in elevated ſentiments. His poetry is good, and his language pure and elegant. He is, notwithſtanding, too cold and unintereſting; and flowery rather, than tragic. His beſt dramas are Jane Shore and the Fair Penitent, which excel in the tender and pathetic.

Dr. Young's Revenge diſcovers genius and fire; but wants tenderneſs, and turns too much on the direful paſſions. In the Mourning Bride of Congreve there are fine ſituations and much good poetry. The tragedies of Thomſon are too full of a ſtiff morality, which renders them dull and formal. His Tancred and Sigiſmunda is his maſterpiece; and for the plot, characters, and ſentiments, juſtly deſerves a place among the beſt Engliſh tragedies.

A Greek tragedy is a ſimple relation of an intereſting incident. A French tragedy is a ſeries of artful and refined converſations. An Engliſh tragedy is a combat of ſtrong paſſions, ſet before us in all their violence, producing deep diſaſters, and filling the ſpectators with grief. Antient tragedies are more natural and ſimple; modern more artful and complex.

COMEDY.

THE ſtrain and ſpirit of comedy diſcriminate it ſufficiently from tragedy. While pity, terror, and the other ſtrong paſſions form the province of the latter; the ſole inſtrument of the former is ridicule. Follies and vices, and whatever in the human character is improper, or expoſes to cenſure and ridicule, are objects of comedy. As a ſatirical exhibition of the improprieties and follies of men, it is uſeful and moral. It is commendable by this ſpecies of compoſition to correct and to poliſh the manners of men. Many vices are more ſucceſsfully exploded by ridicule, than by ſerious arguments. It is poſſible however to employ ridicule improperly; and by its operation to do miſchief inſtead of good. For ridicule is far from being a proper teſt of truth. Licentious writers therefore of the comic claſs have often caſt ridicule on objects and characters, which did not deſerve it. But this is not the fault of comedy, but of the turn and genius of certain writers. In the hands of looſe men comedy will miſlead and corrupt; but in thoſe of virtuous writers it is not only a gay and innocent, but a laudable and uſeful entertainment. Engliſh comedy however is frequently a ſchool of vice.

The rules of dramatic action, that were preſcribed for tragedy, belong alſo to comedy. A comic writer muſt obſerve the unities of action, time, and place. He muſt attend to nature and probability. The imi-

tation of manners ought to be even more exact in comedy, than in tragedy; for the subjects of comedy are more familiar and better known.

The subjects of tragedy are confined to no age, nor country; but it is otherwise in comedy. For the decorums of behaviour, and the nice discriminations of character, which are the subjects of comedy, change with time and country; and are never so well understood by foreigners, as by natives. We weep for the heroes of Greece and Rome; but we are touched by the ridicule of such manners and characters only, as we see and know. The scene therefore of comedy should always be laid in the author's own country and age. The comic poet catches the manners living, as they rise.

It is true indeed, that Plautus and Terence did not follow this rule. The scene of their comedies is laid in Greece, and they adopted the Greek laws and customs. But it is to be remembered, that comedy was in their age a new entertainment in Rome, and that they were contented with the praise of translating Menander and other comic writers of Greece. In posterior times the Romans had the "Comœdia Togata," or what was founded on their own manners, as well, as the "Comœdia Palliata," which was taken from the Greeks.

There are two kinds of comedy, that of character, and that of intrigue. In the last the plot or action of the play is the principal object. In the first the dis-

play of a peculiar character is the chief point; and to this the action is ſubordinate. The French abound moſt in comedies of character. Such are the capital pieces of Moliere. The Engliſh have inclined more to comedies of intrigue. Such are the plays of Congreve; and in general there is more ſtory, action, and buſtle in Engliſh, than in French comedy.

The perfection of comedy is to be found in a proper mixture of theſe two kinds. Mere converſation without an intereſting ſtory is inſipid. There ſhould ever be ſo much intrigue, as to excite both fears and wiſhes. The incidents ſhould be ſtriking, and afford a proper field for the exhibition of character. The piece however ſhould not be overcharged with intrigue; for this would be to convert a comedy into a novel.

With reſpect to characters it is a common error of comic writers, to carry them much beyond real life; indeed it is very difficult to hit the preciſe point, where wit ends, and buffoonery begins. The comedian may exaggerate; but good ſenſe muſt teach him, where to ſtop.

In comedy there ought to be a clear diſtinction in characters. The contraſt of characters however by pairs, and by oppoſites, is too theatrical and affected. It is the perfection of art to conceal art. A maſterly writer gives us his characters, diſtinguiſhed rather by ſuch ſhades of diverſity, as are commonly found in ſociety, than marked by ſuch oppoſitions, as are ſeldom

brought into actual contraſt in any of the circumſtances of life.

The ſtyle of comedy ought to be pure, lively, and elegant, generally imitating the tone of polite converſation, and never deſcending into groſs expreſſions. Rhyme is not ſuitable to comic compoſition; for what has poetry to do with the converſation of men in common life? The current of the dialogue ſhould be eaſy without pertneſs, and genteel without flippancy. The wit ſhould never be ſtudied, nor unſeaſonable.

ANTIENT COMEDY.

THE antient comedy was an avowed ſatire againſt particular perſons, brought upon the ſtage by name. Such are the plays of Ariſtophanes; and compoſitions of ſo ſingular a nature illuſtrate well the turbulent and licentious ſtate of Athens. The moſt illuſtrious perſonages, generals and magiſtrates, were then made the ſubjects of comedy. Vivacity, ſatire, and buffoonery are the characteriſtics of Ariſtophanes. On many occaſions he diſplays genius and force; but his performances give us no high idea of the attic taſte for wit in his age. His ridicule is extravagant; his wit farcical; his perſonal raillery cruel and biting; and his obſcenity intolerable.

Soon after the age of Ariſtophanes the liberty of attacking perſons by name on the ſtage was prohibited

by law. The middle comedy then took its riſe. Living perſons were ſtill attacked, but under fictitious names. Of theſe pieces we have no remains. They were ſucceeded by the new comedy; when it became, as it is now, the buſineſs of the ſtage to exhibit manners and characters, but not thoſe of particular perſons. The author of this kind, moſt celebrated among the Greeks, was Menander; but his writings are periſhed.

Of the new comedy of the antients the only remains are the plays of Plautus and Terence. The firſt is eminent for the *vis comica*, and for an expreſſive phraſeology. He bears however many marks of the rudeneſs of the dramatic art in his time. He has too much low wit and ſcurrility; and is by far too quaint and full of conceit. He has more variety and more force, than Terence; and his characters are ſtrongly marked, though ſometimes coarſely.

Terence is poliſhed, delicate, and elegant. His ſtyle is a model of the moſt pure and graceful latinity. His dialogue is always correct and decent; and his relations have a picturesque and beautiful ſimplicity. His morality is in general unexceptionable; his ſituations are intereſting; and many of his ſentiments touch the heart. He may be conſidered, as the founder of ſerious comedy. In ſprightlineſs and ſtrength he is deficient. There is a ſameneſs in his characters and plots; and he is ſaid to have been inferior to Menander, whom he copied. To form a perfect comic author, the ſpirit and fire of Plautus ought to be united with the grace and correctneſs of Terence.

SPANISH COMEDY.

THE moſt prominent object in modern comedy is the Spaniſh theatre. The chief commedians of Spain are Lopez de Vega, Guillen and Calderon. The firſt, who is the moſt famous of them, wrote above a thouſand plays; and was infinitely more irregular, than Shakeſpeare. He totally diſregarded the three unities, and every eſtabliſhed rule of dramatic writing. One play often includes many years, and even the whole life of a man. The ſcene, during the firſt act, is in Spain; the next in Italy; and the third in Africa. His plays are chiefly hiſtorical; and are a mixture of heroic ſpeeches, ſerious incidents, war and ſlaughter, ridicule and buffoonery. He jumbles together chriſtianity and paganiſm, virtues and vices, angels and gods. Notwithſtanding his faults, he poſſeſſed genius, and great force of imagination. Many of his characters are well painted; many of his ſituations are happy; and from the ſource of his rich invention dramatic writers of other nations have frequently drawn their materials. He was conſcious himſelf of his extreme irregularities, and apologized for them from the prevailing taſte of his countrymen.

FRENCH COMEDY.

THE comic theatre of France is allowed to be correct, chaſte, and decent. The comic author, in

whom the French glory moſt, is Moliere. In the judgment of French critics he has nearly reached the ſummit of perfection in his art. Nor is this the deciſion of mere partiality. Moliere is the ſatiriſt only of vice and folly. His characters were peculiar to his own times; and in general his ridicule was juſtly directed. His comic powers were great; and his pleaſantry is always innocent. His Miſanthrope and Tartuffe are in verſe, and conſtitute a kind of dignified comedy, in which vice is expoſed in the ſtyle of elegant and polite ſatire. In his proſe comedies there is a profuſion of ridicule; but the poet never gives alarm to modeſty, nor caſts contempt on virtue. With theſe high qualities however conſiderable defects are mingled. In unravelling his plots he is unhappy; as this is frequently brought on with too little preparation, and in an improbable manner. In his verſe comedies he is not always ſufficiently intereſting; and he is too full of long ſpeeches. In his riſible pieces in proſe he is too farcical. But upon the whole it may be affirmed, that few writers ever attained ſo perfectly the true end of comedy. His Tartuffe and Avare are his two capital productions.

ENGLISH COMEDY.

FROM the Engliſh theatre is naturally expected a greater variety of original characters in comedy, and bolder ſtrokes of wit and humor, than from any other

modern ſtage. Humor is in ſome degree peculiar to England. The freedom of the government and the unreſtrained liberty of Engliſh manners are favorable to humor and ſingularity of character. In France the influence of a deſpotic court ſpreads uniformity over the nation. Hence comedy has a more amplified and a freer vein in Britain, than in France. But it is to be regretted, that the comic ſpirit of Britain is often diſgraced by indecency and licentiouſneſs.

The firſt age however of Engliſh comedy was not infected by this ſpirit. The plays of Shakeſpeare and Ben Johnſon have no immoral tendency. The comedies of the former diſplay a ſtrong, creative genius; but are irregular in conduct. They are ſingularly rich in characters and manners; but often deſcend to pleaſe the mob. Johnſon is more regular, but ſtiff and pedantic; though not void of dramatic genius. Much fancy and invention, and many fine paſſages, are found in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher. But in general they abound in romantic incidents, unnatural characters, and coarſe alluſions.

Change of manners has rendered the comedies of the laſt age obſolete. For it is the exhibition of prevailing modes and characters, that gives a charm to comedy. Thus Plautus was antiquated to the Romans in the days of Auguſtus. But to the honor of Shakeſpeare his Falſtaff is ſtill admired, and his Merry Wives of Windſor read with pleaſure.

After the reſtoration of Charles II. the licentiouſneſs, which polluted the court and nation, ſeized upon comedy. The rake became the predominant character. Ridicule was thrown upon chaſtity and ſobriety. At the end of the play indeed the rake becomes a ſober man; but through the performance he is a fine gentleman, and exhibits a picture of the pleaſurable enjoyments of life. This ſpirit of comedy had the worſt effect on youth of both ſexes, and continued to the days of George II.

In the comedies of Dryden there are many ſtrokes of genius; but he is haſty and careleſs. As his object was to pleaſe, he followed the current of the times, and gave way to indelicacy and licentiouſneſs. His indecency was at times ſo groſs, as to occaſion a prohibition of his plays on the ſtage.

After Dryden flouriſhed Cibber, Vanburgh, Farquhar, and Congreve. Cibber has ſprightlineſs and a pert vivacity; but his incidents are ſo forced and unnatural, that his performances have all ſunk into obſcurity, excepting The Careleſs Huſband and The Provoked Huſband. Of theſe the firſt is remarkable for the eaſy politeneſs of the dialogue; and it is tolerably moral in its conduct. The latter, in which Cibber was aſſiſted by Vanburgh, is perhaps the beſt comedy in the Engliſh language; and even to this it may be objected, that it has a double plot. Its characters however are natural, and it abounds with fine painting and happy ſtrokes of humor.

Wit, ſpirit, and eaſe characterize Sir John Vanburgh; but he is the moſt indelicate and immoral of all our comedians. Congreve undoubtedly poſſeſſed genius. He is witty and ſparkling, and full of character and action. Indeed he overflows with wit; for it is often introduced unſeaſonably; and in general there is too much of it for well bred converſation. Farquhar is a light and gay writer; leſs correct and leſs brilliant, than Congreve; but he has more eaſe, and much of the Vis Comica. Like Congreve he is licentious; and modeſty muſt turn from them both with abhorrence. The French boaſt with juſtice of the ſuperior decency of their ſtage, and ſpeak of the Engliſh theatre with aſtoniſhment. Their philoſophical writers aſcribe the profligate manners of London to the indelicacy and corruption of Engliſh comedy.

Of late years a ſenſible reformation has taken place in Engliſh comedy. Our writers of comedy now appear aſhamed of the indecency of their predeceſſors. They may be inferior to Farquhar and Congreve in ſpirit, eaſe, and wit; but they have the merit of being far more innocent and moral.

To the French ſtage we are much indebted for this reformation. The introduction within a few years of a graver comedy in France, called the ſerious or tender comedy, has attracted the attention and approbation of our writers. Gaiety and ridicule are not excluded from this ſpecies of comedy; but it lays the chief ſtreſs on tender and intereſting ſituations. It is ſentimental,

and touches the heart. It pleaſes not ſo much by the laughter, it excites, as by the tears of affection and joy, which it draws forth.

This form of comedy was oppoſed in France, as an unjuſtifiable innovation. It was objected by critics, that it was not founded on laughter and ridicule. But it is not neceſſary, that all comedies be formed on one preciſe model. Some may be gay; ſome ſerious; and ſome may partake of both qualities. Serious and tender comedy has no right to exclude gaiety and ridicule from the ſtage. There are materials for both; and the ſtage is richer for the innovation. In general it may be conſidered, as a mark of increaſing politeneſs and refinement, when thoſe theatrical exhibitions become faſhionable, which are free from indelicate ſentiment and an immoral tendency.

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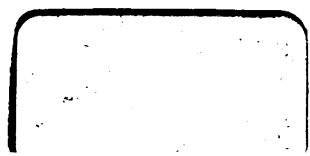
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